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FOR 1900

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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"The object of the founder of the Lectures is to continue the mission of William Belden Noble, whose supreme desire it was to extend the influence of Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life; to make known the meaning of the words of Jesus, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' In accordance with the large interpretation of the Influence of Jesus by the late Phillips Brooks, with whose religious teaching he in whose memory the Lectures are established and also the founder of the Lectures were in deep sympathy, it is intended that the scope of the Lectures shall be as wide as the highest interests of humanity. With this end in view, — the perfection of the spiritual man and the consecration by the spirit of Jesus of every department of human character, thought, and activity, — the Lectures may include philosophy, literature, art, poetry, the natural sciences, political economy, sociology, ethics, history both civil and ecclesiastical, as well as theology and the more direct interests of the religious life. Beyond a sympathy with the purpose of the Lectures, as thus defined, no restriction is placed upon the lecturer."

PREFACE

The William Belden Noble Lectures were founded, in memory of her husband, by the widow of a young American clergyman of that name, who died early. Their object is best described in the extract from the deed of gift printed on the foregoing page. Only two courses have been previously given: the first by six different lecturers; the second by Professor Palmer, of Harvard University. The course now published was given in November and December, 1900. Circumstances have not allowed of so close a revision of them as I should have desired, nor of the addition of notes, or of what the French call "pièces justificatives." The lectures are published as they were delivered; but I have, in this composition, carefully reviewed the documents on which I rely, and I trust that I have made no misstatements of fact or quotation.

The lectures were delivered in the Phillips Brooks House at Harvard. This house, which was founded in memory of the great Bishop, is in itself an emblem of the width of his sympathy and his teaching. It forms a centre for the religious life of the University. On the ground floor are a library and rooms for social intercourse; above these are, on one side, the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, and, on the other, those of a similar society for the Episcopalians; and on the upper floor a library and reading-room for the Roman Catholics, and the large hall in which these lectures were delivered.

The title of these lectures in the main explains their purpose; and I hope that the discussion of it may meet some of the religious needs of our time. The system of religious ordinances, which is sometimes, though too exclusively, identified with the Church, seems to need a closer connection with the social progress at which all Christian bodies are in some way aiming. This connection I believe to have been both helped and hindered by the ideas which have been dominant in Anglo-Saxon Christianity during the last half century. The Oxford Movement, the effects of which have been felt far beyond the bounds of Anglicanism, was not a High Church movement in the sense of exalting the Church, but in the sense of exalting the system of public worship and its ministers. It encouraged the corporate and social idea of life, and so far was a help to the object aimed at in these lectures; but it was a hindrance to that object in that it restricted the social idea to the fellowship of those bound together by ordinances; and it narrowed this fellowship still further by practically imposing the condition of adherence to the ordinances of the Episcopalian church system. This was done on the supposition that that system and its ministers had a special and divine sanction.

It is true that there has been a strong reaction against these ideas; but the reaction has often taken the form of setting up some other ministry and some other set of ordinances as having a similar sanction. "Old

Priest" has been "writ large," not only in presbytery, but in many systems of ordinances. Wherever systems and ordinances are considered to hold an absolute position and to be of primary importance, they become dangerous to the Christian life; for then a false standard is introduced: men judge themselves and one another, not simply by the standard of Christian righteousness, but, in part at least, by the forms which they profess and the modes of worship which they practice. They do not take Christ and his divine nature as their judge, but another standard,—that of their church system. And thus the church system, when it is not looked upon as plastic, and adaptable to the needs of the time and the promotion of Christian righteousness in the widest sense, becomes a real danger to both religious and social progress. It is imagined to have been imposed at some past time by authority, and men's thoughts about it turn to an unreal and impractical antiquarianism. And since the genuine antiquity is obscure, and the New Testament gives no authoritative pronouncement on church forms, "antiquity" is apt to mean mediævalism, and especially the practices of the last two centuries before the Reformation. This, however, is but an extreme case of that which happens generally wherever church forms are regarded as having some absolute authority. An ecclesiastical conscience is a perverted conscience: it is sure to come into conflict at some point with straightforward morality. It is this, probably, more than anything else, which is accountable for the breach (so far as it exists) between religious observances and the general conscience. It is not too much to say that men often find more satisfaction for the real needs of their spirits in social circles, in secular pursuits, in the club or the theatre, than in the place of worship.

The idea of a church system of any kind having been imposed by authority appears to be giving way before historical investigation; and there is, therefore, some danger that men may go by reaction to the opposite extreme, and may think that the whole apparatus of religious ordinances is valueless for moral and social purposes. And since they have been accustomed almost to identify religion with these ordinances, they may imagine that religion itself is, as is sometimes said, "played out," and that we must turn away from religion if we would insure moral and social progress. This tendency is often observed in young people, who, at the university, or generally in opening life, are undergoing a reaction from the religious instruction and discipline of home or school. It is felt also in the diminution of candidates for ordination, and in the number of those whom the French call "pratiquants." It is almost a commonplace, in certain quarters, that we must have less of religion, and more of justice and love.

It has, therefore, seemed to me that it might be well for one who, during a long life and ministry, has worked upon the conviction that no one form or system is binding upon Christian believers, and that, as St. Stephen and St. Paul taught, following Christ himself, all ordinances are essentially secondary and mutable, to show that ordinances have still a perfectly valid ground, and that they may be made to serve powerfully the ends of social righteousness. It is admitted that Christianity, which is faith and righteousness, is in its essence independent of ordinances. Christ said but a few words about the Church and the sacraments; nothing at all about public worship. But, on the other hand, experience shows that, human nature being what it is, both faith and righteousness are in a large measure dependent for their support upon worship and sacraments. While we admit, therefore, that these are not to be placed on the same level with moral and social goodness, but as subservient and mutable, it is of the utmost importance to show how they may be adapted to the needs of our time, and especially to that social progress on which the mind of all the more advanced sections of the Christian Church is set.

In attempting to show this, I have made no distinction between the various sections into which Christians are divided. The question I have raised affects them all alike, if not equally; and I am not without hope that the consideration of it may tend to draw us all together, since all have the same needs. Our differences have arisen mainly from the idea that Christian ordinances have an absolute, not a relative position, and that consequently any deviation from the absolute standard, as we conceive and adopt it, must cause separation. When we come to the belief that they are of secondary, not primary importance, and that their value consists mainly in their power to build up the Christian life of the community in faith and righteousness, we cannot but feel that the matters which divide us are far less than the great objects of the Christian life. And when we engage in the attempt to adapt our ordinances freely to the needs of a new time, this attempt, being common to us all, must draw out our sympathies towards one another; for there is nothing so unifying as a common work. It is not so important that we should worship together as that we should feel and work together. Our forms may remain as diverse as before, and yet we may feel our object to be identical, and may interpret our ordinances — both to ourselves and to each other — in a sense congenial to our great and common purpose of building up a righteous society.

It may be well to summarize very shortly the teaching of these lectures.

1. The Church is the body of faithful men banded together for the establishment of Christ's righteousness in the world, and freely organizing themselves in societies for that purpose. It is distinguished, on the one hand, from the Kingdom of God, which is the dominion of God and his righteousness generally in the development of mankind; and, on the other hand, from the church system, the system of ordinances, which is the special subject of these lectures.

2. The Bible is the history of the divine society growing up amongst men, and must be used in the system of church ordinances

in such a way as to promote and strengthen Christian and social righteousness.

3. The Sacraments are federal acts, intended to bind the members of the society together in loving and just relations to God and to one another; and they should be used so as to strengthen all these relations and hallow all the bonds by which men are united together in society.

4. The Creeds, confessions, doctrinal forms, and other means by which expression is given to our common faith, are symbols or rallying points to make us understand each other, and should be framed or accepted, changed or interpreted, with a view to the furtherance of a brotherhood of Christian righteousness.

5. Our Public Worship and Preaching must have in them the element of universality, and must be so conducted as to build up Christian relations, not in the congregation only, but also in the general community.

6. The Pastorate should not be that of the individual minister alone. He should be the leader in a pastoral energy pervading the

community. The pastorate should be understood to include: first, all members of the worshiping body, who are not to be passive, but active workers; secondly, all who have the care of the young, the ignorant, and the poor; thirdly, all who, as rulers or men of influence, are, in the Biblical sense, shepherds of the people.

I cannot conclude this Preface without a word of thanks to those who honored me with the invitation to give these lectures, and for the kind hospitality with which they welcomed me in my short visit to America. They have given me the assurance that a previous work of mine, on "The World as the Subject of Redemption," into which the thought and experience of a life were concentrated, but which has had little effect in England, has been a help to many in America, who in their turn are teachers of others; and the hope that it may not be without influence in the life of the greatest Christian community the world has yet seen. May the great commonwealth become more and more conscious of its mission to the world, and capable of doing, with ever clearer purpose, the work of a Christian Church in furtherance of the Kingdom of God.

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CHRISTIAN ORDINANCES AND SOCIAL PROGRESS

I

THE CHURCH SYSTEM

One of the greatest changes which Christianity has been undergoing in the century which is now closing in is the perception that it is concerned not merely with individual souls, but with the general and especially the social welfare of mankind. This change is coincident with the greater interest in social questions which has grown up in the political sphere; indeed, the phenomena are identical, for we cannot separate the church from the general progress of the race. The statesman sees that he can no longer deal with the people, after the fashion of the old political economy, as a number of separate individuals, each of them fully capable of managing his whole life in all its range and relations, but that he has to be something of a philanthropist, dealing with the masses as needing aid, refusing to allow great aggregates of population to spring up without security for sanitation, for decent dwellings, for immunity from fire, for education, and perhaps some provision for the higher intellectual and moral culture, for recreation, and even for amusement; and how far this aid towards social well-being may come under the domain of public law is a question to be determined by future experience. The religionist approaches the same class of questions from a different side. We have been accustomed, especially as partakers of the Protestant and evangelical movement, to think almost wholly of the individual, his redemption from spiritual death, his personal training in holiness; and of the Christian society, by whatever name we call it, or whatever scope we assign to it, as mainly of value as giving expansion to individual piety by means of fellowship and instruction; as a temporary scaffolding which will pass away, leaving the perfected individual as alone the ultimate result. But the wave of Christian opinion which has passed over the whole community of the English-speaking race, and of which the so-called Oxford movement was only one conspicuous and one-sided embodiment, has led us to realize that the body of believers has its rights; that the individual cannot be perfected alone; that the redemption of Christ is applicable to developed societies as well as to individual souls; and that, as Plato said that righteousness was to be best studied when written in large letters on the structure of the commonwealth, so Christian principle is to be found in its fullness in the organized life of the Christian community. This principle, which is recognized fully in the later epistles of St. Paul, may be taken as now admitted. But the extension to be given to it has not been made clear; and it will be one of the main objects of the present course of lectures to elucidate it. We all admit that we are bound to look beyond the immediate circle of those with whom we are united in Christian worship; that the principles of religion must be applied to the whole range of social life. We all pray for our rulers and the welfare of the nation to which we belong, and for public righteousness, for the mutual well-being of all classes and orders in the community, and especially for the welfare of the poor. But we have been somewhat slow to confess that all these objects, in their full extent, belong to the domain of Christianity; and, by confining the word "church" to the society of Christians only so far as they are engaged in acts of common worship and the limited range of beneficence which a body of worshipers can reach, we have been in danger of cutting off the general life of mankind, even in a Christian country, from the blessed influences which our worship is meant to foster. It is the object of the present lectures to point out the bearing of the Christian institutions connected with our worshiping bodies on the life and progress of the whole society around us.

There are three terms, the meaning of which it may be well to make clear before we enter into the subject more particularly. These are (1) The Kingdom of God; (2) The Church; (3) The Church-system of Ordinances.

I

The kingdom of God is the dominion of God, — that is, of God as we know Him in

Christ — over the hearts and lives of men. Since God is love, and since his manifestation is preëminently in the Cross of Christ, this implies the dominion of self-sacrificing love. Wherever God as revealed in Christ, and the divine principle of love, which is the name or nature of God, is acknowledged as supreme in men's conscience and conduct, there is the kingdom of God. It is to be seen in the individual heart and mind. The kingdom of God is within you. But it is to be seen also in the progress of the divine principle in the world, which grows like the mustard seed, or like the "corn of wheat," often unnoticed "while men sleep and rise night and day;" and the assurance, of which the resurrection of Christ, his ascension and his session at the right hand of God, are the typical representation, is that this process will go on till everything is subject to Him. He must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet. He must put down all rule and authority and power, that is, all that is contrariant to Him. Thrones, dominions, powers, are all created by Him, — they claim in their true essence to represent the perfect righteousness, of which He is the full embodiment, and therefore they emanate from Him, the Lord of righteousness and love, — and by Him all things consist or stand fast; for righteousness is the only bond of society. And the purpose of God disclosed by St. Paul is that God will gather together all things in Christ in the fullness of time. This is the true apocalyptic vision, as practical as it is true, which is found in the Book of Daniel and in the vision of John at Patmos, the real "fifth monarchy," as sane and free from fanaticism as was the Christ Himself.

For what is imported by these apocalyptic symbols? Simply the progress, the discovery, the practice, of true relations among men; and this I take to be the goal of all progress. The human side of God's nature is love; where righteousness and love reign among men, there is the kingdom of God. This kingdom is in its essence as wide as the human race: that is, it claims to rule over all men and all systems of life. And the various religious and political systems which have existed or exist now among men are in some sense attempts to realize it. We cannot speak of any of them, now that they have been so fully brought to light, as if they were merely evil. The δαιμόνια, which we are apt to translate as "devils," are really spirits of various degrees of good or evil; and it was a part of the great service rendered by Origen in the third century to have brought this out. There are, no doubt, the unclean or violent spirits which we read of in the Gospels, which need to be cast out: but there are spirits, which are of a higher kind, which can be and shall be made servants of Christ. No one could think of the Pythian Apollo, the lord of light and intellect, as wholly bad: only when Paul met with the devotee of this δαιμόνιον, debased as it was to a mean and money-getting soothsaying, and confronted it with the pure truth and holiness of Christ, the light that had been in it became darkness, like the lurid flame of a torch in the daylight, and it had to be cast out.

Has, then, the kingdom of God, which both Christ and his forerunner preached, into which they called men to enter, which they urged their followers to proclaim, which was to be the object of Christian endeavors ("Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"), no outward form of existence among men? Is it no real society, but a kind of metaphor, in the sense in which we speak of the animal or vegetable *kingdom*, or in which we say that a man is under the *dominion* of some fixed idea? To maintain this would be a contradiction to the laws of the human spirit; for its nature is to work from within outwardly: the idea must have its realization. The sense of social righteousness and love must incessantly strive to embody itself in institutions, in laws, in arrangements, in organized societies. When Christ said that his kingdom was not of this world, He did not mean that it was not to have any realization on the surface of this globe, but that its spirit was not a worldly spirit: it was not compacted by fraud or violence. Nor again did He imply that force should never be used, for force and violence are not the same. Every society, of whatever kind, must enforce its rules, and enforcement means, ultimately, an appeal to force; and justice, however patient, must, even for the sake of protection to the weak, and for the maintenance of the life of society, in the last resort flame forth and strike home. But the progress of the Christian principle among men can be traced by the constant diminution of the use of force, and the increased reliance on persuasion. This is the very root of democracy and political freedom — what Thucydides called the trustful spirit of liberty. And the ideal at which we aim is a state in which the moral sanctions will be sufficient, and the use of force will cease entirely.

Meanwhile, every society of men must aim at this state, however feebly. There is no true social principle but that of justice and love. From the days of Thrasymachus, the interlocutor of Socrates in Plato's Republic, to those of Nietzsche or of Ingersoll, the idea that will and force can be the basis of society has only to show itself in order to be reproved.

The kingdom of God, then, is the reign of God over men, which is ever coming more and more, being increasingly realized in human society.

II

What, then, is the Church? It is the society in which the name of Christ is confessed as supreme over the whole organism. It cannot be identified with the kingdom, because the empire of the divine Spirit, though constantly striving to realize itself, and gaining its realization in a greater or less degree, is not bound up with any organization, and is often to be seen in men and communities to which Christ as manifested in the flesh has not been made known. The Word is the light of every man, and whenever it is recognized and its power admitted to rule, there is the kingdom of God. But where Christ is known and acknowledged as supreme in the common life, there is the Church.

I know that it has been the custom to confine the word church to a company of persons bound together mainly for purposes of common worship; and it may seem an impracticable piece of purism to refuse to use the common terminology; as if any one should decline to speak of charity and charitable institutions because we know that charity or love means much more than kind offices for the poor, or as if a man should refuse in America to apply the word democracy to a particular political party because it has in other countries a wider significance. But the case is not similar, for no one here would deny the wider sense of the political term; whereas the use made of the word church implies not merely that the society organized for worship is a home of God's Spirit, but that it is the only home of it; that it is the specially chosen form (established by Christ Himself, as is often maintained) in which God has willed that those who are faithful to Him should be bound together, and that all other forms of social life are forever to be looked upon as profane ground outside the sanctuary. This view of things appears to me fundamentally unchristian, unhistorical, and calculated to subvert the purpose of God as stated above, and ultimately to sterilize the worship itself for social purposes.

It is unchristian, for it is of the essence of heathenism to make this distinction of the sacred and profane. "Procul, O procul, este profani" and "Odi profanum vulgus et arceo" are sayings wholly abhorrent to the spirit of Christ. No doubt in the Old Testament dispensation — that is, in the ceremonial part — we have the idea of holiness as that of outward separation. Place, day, nation, land, persons, are marked off as holy. But this was but for a time — a shadow of things to come. In Christ there is no such distinction. He is the Saviour of all men, Jew or Gentile.

His moral teaching is absolutely universal. From the time of his appearance among men, the world itself is holy. In our weakness we may feel it necessary to consecrate special days or places or persons; but we know that this is done either as a mere distinction of service, or else as giving a type which all others are to follow (let Sunday serve as an illustration for both these distinctions). The moment we begin to say, "This is holy and the rest unholy," we stand on the ground of heathenism or Judaism, not of Christianity. And why should the case be different with societies of men? Would any one dare to say that the society of worshipers is Christ's, and is holy, but the society of legislators or of medical men was not Christ's, and unholy?

It is supposed that the function of public worship is specially Christian in contrast with all other forms of social union. Are we to follow Christ? or tradition? It is certain that our Lord said nothing to encourage his disciples to hold assemblies of public worship. Not a word in the Gospels can be quoted to that effect. He made use of the synagogue worship to proclaim the kingdom: and we may certainly infer from this that He in no sense disapproved of it, and that it may profitably be used for Christian purposes, as may every other part of human life. But from this to the idea that it may be isolated from the rest as specially Christian, or made the special mark of a man's Christianity, is a very long step, and one which has proved most disastrous. It is not too much to say that it would be possible for a Christian society to exist in which there was no public worship. Richard Rothe, whose work on theological ethics has reigned for fifty years in Germany with almost undisputed supremacy, believed that this was the proper tendency of religious life; that is, that instead of going to church Christians would realize that they *are* the Church, and that they would not have to come together to say to each other, "Know the Lord," because they would feel God everywhere present. Is not this, indeed, the ideal of the Apocalypse — no Temple, but a God-inhabited society?

I say further, the conception which makes public worship and ordinances the exclusive or special function of the Church is unhistorical. We must take the words of the New Testament according to their use in the Old.

The word ecclesia, which we translate church, was the word which in the Old Testament was used as an equivalent for "the whole congregation of Israel;" that is, not, as has sometimes been supposed, a number of people *called out* from their natural occupations (which are God's ordinance and service) and assembled together for public worship, but the whole body of the people *called out* from their homes to do the business of the nation. It is a word of Greek origin, and had this signification in the Greek cities. As used in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, which was in the hands of St. Paul if not of Christ Himself, it was practically synonymous with the word synagogue, which means a gathering of men together, and, in the local communities, was as far as was possible the governing power of a fraction of the nation. And in these senses our Lord used it in the only two passages in which he speaks of an ecclesia. In one of these he bids his followers take every means for the private settlement of a quarrel; but if this does not succeed, the aggrieved party is to tell it to the ecclesia, that is, the local parish board who governed the assembly with the ruler of the synagogue at its head. All we can infer from this (and it is inference, not direct command) is that, in Christian times, believers should endeavor not to be judges in their own cause, but to get other faithful men to arbitrate between them, or, in the last resort, to get the whole public body of Christians, or their representatives who are appointed as judges, to determine the dispute. In the other place he says: "Upon this rock (whether the rock of faith, or Peter, as the faithful man) I will build my ecclesia." But, as Hort says, we must beware of bringing into our interpretation the developments or associations of later times. There were many such ecclesias or synagogues at that time, representing particular sets of persons, as we read in the Acts of the synagogues of the Cyrenians or of the Libertini; and each of them attempted, so far as circumstances allowed, to enforce the law of Moses, and to train their members in the national discipline. Our Lord, then, using a word which was perfectly familiar to those who heard Him, says that the ecclesia which He will form will be grounded upon faith in Him like that of Peter; that is to be its principle. It is to enforce the law and discipline (for He did not come to destroy but to fulfill), only that it will be a spiritualized law, a spiritualized discipline; faith will interpret it, as Christ Himself interpreted the law in the Sermon on the Mount. Now, it may be admitted freely that, for want of sovereign power, the Jewish ecclesia could not go far beyond excommunication or putting men out of the synagogue and the forty stripes save one, which were all in operation in the time of our Lord and St. Paul, in the enforcement of the law; and that, being hemmed in more and more on this side, it naturally developed more largely in the direction of instruction and prayer; yet we must remember that in the Old Testament, which was read continually (Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogue every Sabbath day), no sanction was given to separate assemblies for worship: life and its conduct were the theme of the law. And thus, in the view of our Lord when He spoke of building his ecclesia, the thought, and the meaning of his words to his auditors, would be not exclusively or even primarily an assembly of persons praying and exhorting, but a fraction of the nation which acknowledged God, who were seeking to regulate their lives according to his will.

It is unnecessary to trace this out historically, which, indeed, I have done elsewhere,[1] showing how the Church was cooped up during the era of persecution and unable to lay hold fully on human life; and that, when the time of freedom came, the limited view had become so habitual that the best minds were occupied almost wholly with matters relating to worship and doctrine; how then the monastic system drew men away from the proper calling of the Church, namely, the winning of the world to Christian righteousness, and the supremacy of the clergy in the Middle Ages again tended to give ritual and ordinance an undue place; and how, even after the Reformation, the Church turned to controversies on similar subjects: yet how, on the other hand, the high aim of claiming the world for Christ was never completely lost sight of, whether in the covenant by which Theodosius and Gratian accepted the supremacy of Christ over the Empire, of which Professor Allen has said, "This was the social compact by which . . . the Empire became Christian, or was only another name for the Catholic Church;" or in the attempt of Hildebrand and his successors to make the clerical power as representing Christ supreme over all spheres and persons; or in the system of the Church of England, which recognizes no distinction of church and state, but consecrates the sovereign and all the public powers to be ministers of God as fully as the clergy; or in the attempts made at Geneva, or in the Puritan communities of New England, to bring the whole range of human life under the rule of Christ.

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[1] *The World as the Subject of Redemption* (Longmans). Lectures iv. to vi.

This does not imply necessarily that matters of public worship should be under the control of the nation as they are in England. In a country like the United States, even if men should be persuaded that Christ's Church, the body which represents Him on earth, is more truly to be found in the whole Christian nation than in the worshiping bodies, it is quite possible that the business of public worship should be left as it is now to the management of the various worshiping communities; they would be in that case private associations, like those which carry on the press or the higher education, or, like the family life, working within the larger church-body of the nation, and fulfilling independently one of its chief functions.

But the great question on which we are bound to be clear is one which is seldom touched upon, namely, this: What is the object for which the Church exists? The assumption that it exists primarily for public worship with some adjuncts of beneficence is usually accepted without question, and I have given reasons why it should be rejected. The thesis which I would maintain in contrast to it is this: that the Church is a company of men banded together to establish Christ's righteousness in the world. This is the Church of the prophets, who bent all their powers to establish righteousness, and looked upon the ordinances of worship as only of use as bearing upon this. Their object was also that of our Lord, who never spoke of ordinances of worship, — even the sacraments, as we shall see, being rather ordinances of life than of worship, — but was Himself the Righteous One, whose whole life was spent in the cause of righteousness. This object is all-comprehensive, and therefore the society which is grounded upon it, which has for its object to live out a complete life of Christian righteousness in its largest range, is alone worthy to be called " the body of Christ, the fullness of him who filleth all in all." No society but one which is thus complete can secure, in all their range, our true relations with God and with one another, or realize the promise that God, who is righteousness and love, shall dwell in his people.

Now, it may be said that this righteousness is the aim of all the worshiping bodies, that they all seek to train their members in righteousness. But this is the case only to a limited extent. They represent one function and set it before men as the whole. The balance is upset, the truth denaturalized. First, the habit of fixing the mind constantly upon religious ordinances makes us judge by a wrong standard. We judge life by ordinances or doctrines, instead of judging ordinances and doctrines by life. Next, we do not get the advice of the whole community but of a part, whereas the whole body of God's children is that in which alone the Eternal can dwell. Thirdly, we are constantly (though now less than formerly) divided from one another on unreal grounds; so that the worshiping Church presents no united front, and it has often been a hindrance, through its disputes and its narrowness, to the progress of good. It is very difficult for the earnest members of the worshiping bodies to rid themselves of the special tenets and special interests of their own body in judging of social questions; and consequently their action, which ought to command confidence as the representation of God's will (for the Church is the pillar and ground of the truth) constantly creates mistrust.

But there is more than this. The body which claims to represent the kingdom of God must do it not in word, but in deed. Preaching and prayer are good for those who can attend upon them. But they will never by themselves convince the world. It is action and example, a full life fully lived out, that has power over mankind. And a body restricted to a particular class of actions can never give the scope needed for the Spirit of God. It cultivates unduly one side of human nature, and leaves the rest almost untouched.

The pursuit of science, art, politics, medicine, commerce, literature, are all parts of the humanity which Christ has redeemed: and the natural endowments by which these are cultivated become, through Christian faith, χαρισματα, gifts of the Spirit. To insist that they must always remain outside the sphere of church life is to do despite to the Spirit of God, to deprive the holders of them of half their force. Yet, if their spiritual capacity is acknowledged, how can we reckon them as anything less than ministers of God and of his Church?

The doctrine of the Universal Priesthood of believers is held with the lips and the pen, but denied at every turn in practice. In the sphere of public worship, which is claimed exclusively as the Church, it can never have full scope; for in that sphere the minister of the Word and sacraments must necessarily be supreme. Even in what laymen might be able to do in that sphere, they are constantly thwarted, sometimes by the mistrust of the leader, sometimes through the technical and unreal modes of speech and action which pervade the atmosphere of an exclusive body. But what is wanted most is the frank recognition of the secular employments as a spiritual service. It is a noble prayer which is offered on Good Friday in the Protestant Episcopal Church, that every member of the Church in his vocation and ministry may truly and godly serve the Lord. The Church which that collect speaks of cannot be one which is organized, wholly or mainly, for public worship.

In taking this larger view of the Church we are perhaps haunted by the idea that others than those who are strictly Christians would belong to it. But we have learnt in these later years to dwell on the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. And the confession of these is of primary importance for the social work of the Church. No doubt, in any system, notorious evil livers and notorious blasphemers would be incapable of doing the work of the Church; but these will always be kept away, without definite rules, by the laws of a Christian country which undertakes a large part of the discipline once exerted through excommunication, by their own lack of interest in the subject, and by the sound public opinion of the community. It is, meanwhile, of great importance to keep the door open for the return of the prodigal. If the Church is the limited body which is defined by ordinances of worship, then all kinds of exclusion may seem justified, and the present state of narrowness and disunion may be perpetuated. But if it be, as has been here maintained, a comprehensive community engaged in the practical establishment of Christian righteousness, then we may justly take in all who are willing to coöperate in the great task, as St. Paul did at Corinth, where he did not exclude even those who denied the resurrection. There is many a man who seems to himself and to others an unbeliever, who yet is full of the Christian spirit, and by whose exclusion the Church would be the poorer. It has seemed hitherto as if the sole danger were the admission of unfit members. But the danger in our day is much greater that we should exclude, either on theological or ecclesiastical grounds, those who are dear to God. The Church is a vast company which St. Paul likens to a great house, containing not only vessels of gold and silver, but of wood and brass, and some to honor and some to dishonor. There the imperfect may be trained, the babes in Christ may be educated, the erring reformed, the prodigal be accounted as still a son and won back to the Father's open arms.

Let us believe that wherever two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, not for worship only but for secular service, He is there, and there is his Church; and let it stand for our conclusion that Christ's Church is simply human society transformed by the Spirit of God.

III

The Church system is the third term to which we have to assign a clear meaning.

I mean by it the system of ordinances which has grown up within the Christian Church, by which the members realize their incorporation, and make known their wants as a society before God, and unite in acts of adoration, thanksgiving, and praise, and fortify themselves by the reiteration of their faith, by fellowship with one another, and by words of exhortation and of spiritual counsel. I think this is rightly called the Church System, because it is that by which the society becomes most clearly conscious of itself and manifests itself to the world. I need not dwell upon the existence of this system: it is known to us all; its buildings stand high above almost all others in Christian countries; it is often spoken of, though mistakenly as I think, as if it were itself the Church, and its ministers as if they were the only ministers of God and of Christ. Nor do I purpose to enter into any detail of the different modes by which this Church system expresses itself: that would lead us into the region of old controversies, "ignes suppositos cineri doloso;" and even though we might discuss them calmly as things which have lost their *virus* for us, yet, if the mind is directed constantly upon them, they grow with surprising rapidity into a position of undue preëminence, and are apt to obscure that truth and life to which they are meant to minister. It will be my object in the remainder of this lecture to estimate the general bearing of this system upon the life of the Church as a society, taking the Church in the larger sense which I have sought to vindicate for it. This is a task which has never, I think, been adequately attempted.

It is necessary, in the first place, to reiterate that the Founder of Christianity, who is, as has been rightly said, not its Founder merely but its essence, its very substance, gave no single precept or encouragement relating to this system; for I have already pointed out (and shall dwell on it later on) that the sacraments were federal or social acts rather than ordinances of worship. Neither did He give any discouragement to it: and the fact that the ecclesia or synagogue had come in his day to be largely, though not solely, concerned with public worship may be taken as a justification for its existence in the ecclesia which He founded. But not for its supremacy; for his ecclesia was to be grounded on faith, which is in sharp contrast to every system which makes ordinances supreme. The synagogue itself represented primarily the supremacy of the law of righteousness over that of sacrifices. Post-exilic Judaism, it has been said, was not Levitical but Rabbinical, a teaching, however, which, as we know, had degenerated into a formal moralism and ceremonialism, against which the spirit of faith rebels. But, further, the faith in Christ, on which the ecclesia was to be built, was faith in One who, by his own life and teaching, showed that personal piety, truth, justice, love, and the acts flowing from them, were alone of importance, and that public functions of religion, if they existed, must be strictly directed toward the promotion of righteousness. "Faith," moreover, stands for all that is real or vital in religion and life, in contrast with ordinances or system of every kind. It is manifest, therefore, that the system of ordinances, or, as we might say in the present day, church-going or public worship, was not of the essence of the Christian ecclesia. Still less could it be, as it has since been commonly held to be, its chief or paramount object.

An attempt has sometimes been made to trace the prayers and liturgies in common use back to the time of the Apostles, and even beyond. It is thought that, when it is said of the first church immediately after Pentecost that its members "continued in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in *the* prayers," these prayers were those commonly in use in the synagogue and in the Temple. This interesting idea may be well founded, and it is helpful to us to think of the evidence it affords of the continuity of Judaic and Christian worship.

But it would be wrong to draw from this the inference that these prayers constituted an authoritative rule of Christian devotion. The statement just quoted shows, indeed, that from the first the members of the Church had their assemblies for worship, unless we interpret it as meaning that they continued to attend the daily prayers of the Temple. But the evidence of Apostolic times, especially of the Epistles of St. Paul, is quite clear to the effect that there was no authoritative rule; that it was enough that all should be done decently and in order. And in all the Protestant churches it has been strenuously maintained that each body of Christians has the right to regulate its own forms of worship. The attempt made in the Anglican Communion of late years to give a kind of divine sanction to the forms of the mediæval Church is in direct contradiction to the Thirty-fourth of their own Articles of Religion, which asserts that every particular or national Church has authority to regulate such things, and that it is not necessary that these forms should be in all cases the same and utterly alike, for that in all times they have been diverse. The system of Ordinances, which is the subject of these lectures, is of secondary, not primary importance: and is essentially variable according to the needs of the Christian life.

How, then, we ask, will this system of Christian Ordinances best minister to the social life, the special importance of which has been touched upon in the beginning of this lecture?

1. By realizing that it itself constitutes a society; by laying the chief stress on the social or corporate side of what is commonly called church life. We are still haunted too much with the idea that the spiritual is only the individual. But this idea is grounded on a false philosophy, that on which the old political economy was grounded, which was purely rational, and supposed that each man had full consciousness of himself and his conditions, and was capable of steering his own way unaided. I propose to dwell upon this more fully in the third of these lectures, but I must touch shortly upon it here. Human life is really made up of two chief elements, the conscious, rational, or voluntary, which chooses and acts in full light and independence; and, on the other hand, the instinctive,

the habitual, the social, in which both thought and act are swayed by other than personal influences. Some of these influences come, no doubt, from physical causes, such as climate or geographical position. But the chief part of them are social. The moral atmosphere in which we are nurtured, the education we have received, the political institutions under which we live, the habits which these engender, and the currents of thought and feeling to which we all are subjected, — these form an essential and powerful element in our lives. These are the tendencies, the moral forces, the social powers, of which we commonly, if vaguely, speak. They correspond to, if they are not to be identified with, the thrones, principalities, dominions, and powers, which were personified in the Gnosticizing systems of early Christian days, and of which St. Paul says that they are all to be made subject to Christ. Among these angelic powers, of brighter or darker hue, the influence of the Church of Christ stands preëminent: and when St. Paul says that "to the principalities and powers in heavenly places is to be made known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God," we cannot be wrong in construing, or at least applying his words to the work of bringing all the social forces into the light of which the Church is the earthly focus. The system of Christian ordinances endeavors to set forth that light; and it must do it, not merely by speaking of it, or by giving sacramental signs of it, but by realizing it in the loving fellowship of its members. In this fellowship let the influences be formed which act so powerfully on young minds, and form in them a kind of presupposition for their whole lives, lasting, often without verification or criticism, far into manhood. Plato spoke of a πρῶτον ψεῦδος, an original lie which lay imbedded in the tissue of the mind, an idea far removed from that of original sin. Let us take care that we impress, not by word merely, but by the conduct of our communities, a πρώτη ἀλήθεια, an original presumption of truth, so that those young or simple ones, who are being trained by our ordinances, should see, realize, feel as a circumambient air which they breathe, the great principles of God's fatherhood, of man's brotherhood, of the compassion which flows from the sense of God's forgiveness, of the unselfish love which flows from the cross of Christ, of the idea of service which flows from his life. This will be the true baptismal regeneration, the substitution in all that we do of the undercurrent of love for the promptings of selfishness. And let us make men realize that we go to church not for ourselves, but for the good of the community: we can edify ourselves alone at home; we come to church and to communion to realize social Christianity. And the consummation for which we look embraces the social life as well as the individual. If there is joy over one sinner that repenteth, there is joy also when the redeemed souls are united in loving fellowship, when the worshiping body realizes in its measure the new Jerusalem coming forth from heaven as a bride adorned for her husband.

2. But while the company of worshipers may realize in their own circle something of the Christianized social life, they are bound to look beyond themselves to the greater society, the fuller Church around them. If no man lives to himself, no society can do it. It was the ruin of Israel that it was content with its own good customs, and would not care for those beyond. Thus, we may say, in Tennyson's words, and take warning from it

for ourselves, "One good custom did corrupt the world." We live in an age in which great social problems have arisen, never thought of by our forefathers. The industrial revolution which has made our great cities, the spread of education, the emancipation of women, the greater freedom of thought — each of these, and all of them acting upon one another, have caused new needs in the social sphere. The housing and general well-being of the poor, the education question, the relations of workmen and capitalists, the temperance question, the population question (most important of all), the marriage question, the question of colonization, of commerce, and of empire — all these demand the thought and energy which once were confined to a far narrower circle. It is true that in many of these men do not see their way, and the first labor needed is that of thought. What the worshiping body can do is to keep constantly before its members the importance and the greatness of social service. There, as much as in worship or meditation, lies the service of God.

3. But it is not so much the actual solution of these questions with which the wor-

shiping body is concerned: it is much more with the spirit in which they are approached. In almost all of them it is the right disposition which is needed. Take, for instance, the relation of employers and employed. If kindness, and mutual respect, and trustfulness, and the honorable feeling of fellow service were present, how easily, for the most part, the difficulty would be settled. And it is just these feelings, as resulting from a faith which unites us to Him who is the centre and the light of humanity, which it is the function of these Christian ordinances to foster. It may be that this can best be done indirectly; but at least by way of illustration or application it should be done. A system of ordinances which does not show itself conscious of the world around it is apt to move in the air, gliding pleasantly along, but without keeping touch with the ground: that means, too often, that it is a sort of aristocratic castle, in which a life of the more courtly virtues may be lived out without sympathy for the woes and ignorance and struggles of the serfs and villeins that cluster round it.

4. But it must do much more than allude to them in general. The time has come in

which social service must be esteemed amongst the highest parts of church work. And it is not enough that there should be sympathy between the so-called churchman and the philanthropist. Those who give themselves to social work, in whatever department, paid or unpaid, should be encouraged to feel that they are engaged in a holy and Christian work. It was well said by an English statesman who was reproached with holding a meeting on municipal affairs in Holy Week that he considered that much of the work which the municipality had to do was preeminently a holy work, since it had so close a bearing on the moral and social welfare of the community. I cannot but think that, so long as the worshiping body continues to maintain that it alone is the Church and the body of Christ, and that all other organizations are something else, the impression must be, upon the minds of those who conduct such organizations, and of the people generally, that they are engaging in work which, if it is not morally degrading, is something lower than what Christians ought to be doing. And this notion, once admitted, lets in every sort of corruption. Our Lord knew of no neutral sphere. "He that is not with me is against me." And we may well say that every organization which refuses to look upon itself as in harmony with the redemptive work of Christ is in danger of drifting into antagonism. No doubt, work of this kind may be really though unconsciously Christian: or men may work in the spirit of Christ, yet be hindered, through the moral confusion which prevails, from confessing Him. But what we should desire is that the assumption should be that nothing inconsistent with the spirit of Christ should be allowed among us: and that the spirit of generous love, which is his, should pervade the whole social movement. Even now, I think, if the story of the Good Samaritan or of the Prodigal Son be named in any assembly, every heart feels that the spirit breathing through those parables is the true spirit in which it desires to act. Such a feeling should be promoted by our worshiping bodies; and instead of thinking it natural that there should be corruption and low gain and moral indifference in men engaged in public work, whether voluntary or political, we should call incessantly in God's name for purity of administration and for Christian zeal in promoting the welfare of our citizens; and that we should expect to find it in public men, since it is work for God and man in which they are engaged.

5. Similarly, the worshiping body must deal with the problems which are yet unsolved. It is very doubtful if it would be desirable in preaching or prayer to assume a particular solution, or to convert a place of worship into a lecture hall for discussing the details of such problems. But, first, the worshiping body may powerfully stimulate thought upon them, and make all men who are engaged in solving them, whether professors of moral, political, and economical science, or editors of periodical literature, or practical experimentalists, feel that it is divine work that they are doing; and it may accept these conclusions when fully tested as part of the revelation of truth which God is giving to our age. This has been realized by some men of science. The great physiologist, Dr. Carpenter, was fond of quoting the words of Kepler that, in gaining truth and enunciating it, he was thinking the thoughts and speaking out the will of the Almighty. He says:[1]

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[1] *The Psychology of Belief*, Roscoe Lecture, Nov. 24, 1873.

"Absolute truth, indeed, no man of science can ever hope to grasp, . . . and he denies the right of any one to impose on him as absolute truth his fallible exposition of the revelation contained in the teachings of religiously inspired men: for *he* claims an equal right to be a true expositor of the revelation conveyed in the divine order of the universe; and the real philosopher, . . . who is constantly striving upwards, so as either himself to reach, or to help his successors to reach, a yet loftier elevation, believes he is thus fulfilling his duty to the great Giver of his own powers of thought, and to the Divine Author of that nature, in which he deems it his highest privilege to be able to read some of the thoughts of God." If it be said that such an elevation of feeling in a scientist is rare, may not the reason be that we have insisted that his calling is something separate from religion instead of viewing it, and teaching him and all men to view it, as part of the work of God's Church, as the sphere in which a spiritual gift may be employed?

The other thing which the worshiping body may do in reference to these unsolved problems is to undertake some work in the social order itself, or to encourage voluntary efforts for social amelioration when made by some of its members. Such efforts may not reach far by themselves; yet they may present an object lesson which may bring about the larger result. A man who in the days of slavery should from religious motives have emancipated his slaves, though he might know well enough that the cessation of slavery could only be brought about by the public powers, yet might have, by his self-sacrificing action, given a vast impetus to the work of a Wilberforce or a Garrison. The voluntary reformatories begun in England by Lord Shaftesbury led to the general adoption of reformatories by the nation itself. The gift of Peabody for the housing of the poor in London has stimulated interest and effort in a work which probably can only be accomplished by municipal bodies. But what I plead for is that, when such works pass over into the hands of public officers, they should not be thought to have lost their religious purpose. We must hope and even expect (for expectation often leads to fulfillment) that the public action, as it has a religious end in view, may be wrought in a religious spirit; we must not say that it is marred by secularism because it has fallen into the hands of those who alone can bring it to its full result. The Ragged School movement in London, no doubt, was a powerful contributor to the universal education now conducted by the school board; but when the fuller education came in, many of those who had conducted the ragged schools clung to the more limited instead of striving that the larger system should be conducted in the same religious spirit. Dr. Chalmers, in his magnificent work at Glasgow, laid down the true lines for the relief of the poor; but he contended that it must always be conducted through the parochial elders and deacons, and he fought strenuously against the Poor-Law. It was a noble effort, yet it was hardly possible that it should succeed. And since it has passed, rightly or wrongly, into the hands of the public guardians of the poor, we need not regret it. There are plenty of other fields for the worshipers in our churches to cultivate. Let them do like many of the pioneers in the backwoods, who, after they had cleared the land and brought it under cultivation, and found that civilized life was pressing in upon them too closely, sold their land and houses, and went to begin, in greater liberty or separation, the congenial task of subduing the earth. What we most desire, what has in a large measure been realized, is that the Christian and wise principles of Dr. Chalmers should be those on which the public relief is administered. We must trust in those public bodies for whose work we pray; and, instead of treating them with a kind of excommunication, strive confidently that they may do it as God's work, not their own, and do it in God's spirit, not in that of Mammon.

II

THE BIBLE

Although the Bible, as containing the supreme revelation of God in Christ, is above the Church, yet the use of the Bible is an ordinance of the church system, and the social bearing of this ordinance is among the chief things to be considered in these lectures. The Church, indeed, has a certain authoritative position in relation to the Scriptures, since the canon means the rule or list of books as it was settled by the gradual and sure judgment of the Christian society: and this canon has vindicated itself by post-Reformation criticism. An examination of what has been called "Novum Testamentum extra Canonem Receptum" confirms it, and dispenses us from going beyond the canonical books in estimating the primitive Christian teaching. The Church's judgment of what contains the true Word of God does not imply, as has been sometimes imagined, that the Church is above the Bible; for true judgment is not willful, but is an acceptance or recognition of the facts already existing. When the popes crowned the emperors, the act was a ratification of the choice of the electors. It is true that the popes were apt to hold that they made the emperor, and could therefore unmake him. But this was a usurpation. The pope was bound to give the sanction which he administered; and, when this ceased, the emperor was emperor still, though he was only called Emperor Elect. Similarly, when a man is ordained, the presumption and profession is that he has received the inward call. God has made him a minister, and the Church or its presiding officer acts ministerially in recognizing him, and does wrong if it withholds the recognition. And thus in determining the list of biblical books the Church asserts no authority over them, but only ratifies the voice of its Lord. Nevertheless, it has freedom in the use of them; and must employ them for their uses of instruction and edification as it thinks best. It must also put them before the people in the church system of ordinances according to the needs which God's Providence indicates.

It will be the object of this lecture to show how the Bible, as a social book, should be used to promote social progress.

The Bible is occupied from the very first, not with the individual merely, but with a society: and it may be said to be the history of the development of society under the eye of God — the society growing more complex by degrees, adapting itself to wider conditions, but preparing for the church developments of later times, of which it gives the type and the principle.

In the account of the creation, the inspiration of which lies not in the statement of the physical developments, but in the confession of the Divine unity of the whole, all leads up to man, who is the image of God. But man is not created as an individual: it is not good that he should be alone. "Male and female created He them." Henry Drummond, in his "Ascent of Man" (and in this he is supported by Fiske), has pointed out that in the earliest developments of life there is provision for sociality: as soon as the primeval cell is formed, another is formed from its side, and thus, side by side with the struggle for life begins the struggle for the life of another —

a type, surely, this of the account of the first husband and wife in Genesis. The first human manifestation is the foundation of the family, and the mutual society, help and comfort which this involves. The family, in its outworking, becomes the seed-plot in which all societies and relations take their rise: so that, just as the scientist sees in the primeval atoms the promise and potency of all the organized world, we, with much fuller light upon the process, may see in the original human pair the beginnings of all social life — of the love which is all-pervading, all-sustaining, in every department, of the justice which goes forth into political and commercial societies, of the social need which begets knowledge and science and literature, of the sense of beauty which eventuates in art and poetry, of the training of character which gives birth to schools and colleges and learned societies. The earth is made for man as its lord, not for man as a single will, but for man as a social being. It is social and political man who is the image of God, and who is to replenish the earth and subdue it.

The first great development is that of the Patriarchal Age, which represents the family growing into the tribe. The family life of the Patriarchs, the scenes of Abraham's fatherly hope, of Isaac's peaceful tent, of Jacob's halting yet ascending career, and the story of Joseph and his brethren, have a charm which never can cease while lovers and parents and children exist upon the earth. They have been well utilized in the marriage service of the body of Christians to which I belong. But the family is expanding into the tribe. The Patriarchs are Sheikhs or heads of wandering communities — a fact which is not sufficiently emphasized in religious teaching. Abraham has 318 servants who bear arms, and are able to cope with kings; and this implies a tribe of at least 1500 persons. Isaac deals with Abimelech as a Prince, and makes the treaty of Beersheba. Jacob makes similarly a treaty at Mizpah with Laban the Syrian; and two of the subordinate tribes, Simeon and Levi, make war on the central people of Palestine at Shechem, their conquest being ratified by the father, when he says on his deathbed that he gives his son Joseph a portion above his brothers which he took from the Amorites with his sword and his bow. It was as head of twelve tribes that he went to Egypt, as an ally of its kings that he dwelt there; and, though his people were oppressed and reduced to slavery, the Exodus is now regarded as their uprising against the oppressor, and the assertion of their nationality.

The Exodus, then, and the work of Moses, when the tribes gained a sense of this unity which insured their eventually becoming one nation, must be regarded as the transition from the tribal to the national life, at least in principle; and the instrument by which this was effected was the recognition, if not the codification, of their national customs by the law of Moses. Critics may differ as to the amount of actual laws which can be traced to the Mosaic era; but law exists in the form of customs long before it is written and promulgated authoritatively. They may differ also as to the relation of the ceremonial to the moral law, and the prevalence of the one or the other at special times; but the rudiments of both must be traced to the period which is known as the Mosaic epoch. An attempt was made by M. Renan in his "History of Israel" to show that this step was one of decadence rather than of progress. The tent life of the Patriarchs, he thought, was more spiritual, leaving more room for the cultivation of the ideal, more unfettered, more open to the light of heaven: the institutional life, that of the nation, was the reverse of all this. He compared it (the comparison would not be recognized as helpful to his argument by those concerned) to the change which was brought about by the unification of Germany. Where were the Goethes and the Fichtes? Instead of them was the positive and authoritative Bismarck. But human life tends to unification and to the closing up of the social relations; and the wisdom of faithful men consists, not in barring or banning the inevitable changes, but in infusing into the new relations the divine spirit of love. Some color might be thought to be given to Renan's contention by the words of St. Paul when he contrasts the faith of Abraham with the law, and says that the law, which was 480 years after, could not make the faith of more effect. But what St. Paul combated was not the law in itself, but the spirit of legalism. The faith which he prescribed was one which put aside, no doubt, the letter, but one which made the law, that is, the detailed social relations of men, all the more stringent. "Do we destroy the law through faith? Nay, but we establish the law." It is evident that prophets and Psalmists had not only no quarrel with the law of just relations as established by their lawgivers, but delighted in it, and felt, like the Deuteronomist, that it was their very life. We must be progressive in our thoughts, and recognize that the larger law of the national society came in accordance with the Divine leading.

But the law of Israel has a special character. It was eminently a social law. As we read it, we cannot but be reminded of some of the ecclesiastical codes of the Middle Ages and of that which it was attempted to introduce as partly an embodiment, partly a substitute for them, into England in the reign of Edward VI. under the name of Reformatio Legum. In these, all matters of conduct, of doctrine, of ritual, of organization, of judicature, of social obligation, are mixed together. And, although this is confusing, and vexatious to the legal or scientific mind, it has the merit of avoiding the harshness of mere legal enactments. There is a sense of filial relationship toward God, and of brotherly feeling toward men in the law of Israel, which we shall hardly find elsewhere, and which preludes the "sweeter manners, purer laws" now partly realized, partly aspired to, in our modern states.

This is especially seen in three features of it, all of which bear on our special subject. In the first place, it cares beyond all else for the poor and hopeless members of the society. Its first provisions are for the slave and the debtor; and these are spoken of constantly as the poor brothers. While other codes of ancient times, right down to the times of Hadrian, gave no rights to slaves, and while the question of debts and mortgages gave rise to revolutions at Athens and Rome, the law of the Hebrews insisted that the slave should have his rights against the most powerful master, that the slave girl should have her dowry, that at the end of seven years the servant should go free, and have some help given him for his future career: while the enactment of a year of jubilee prevented a poor man's property being permanently alienated from his family by the foreclosing of a mortgage. Secondly, there is a note almost of socialism, certainly of the trustfulness of a family, in the provisions of Deut. xxiii. and xxiv., that the man who had abundance, whether in the shape of grain, or grapes, or olives, should leave portions of it for the poor to glean. It is a protest against the extreme view of private property, a demand that, at whatever cost to the theory of rights, the poor brother shall not be let starve. And, thirdly, the whole of this legislation is reckoned as proceeding from the mouth of God — an assertion, surely, not that God, as a great Power, has imposed a moral law, but that, wherever justice is, there is God, and that his fatherly love has to do with legislation and with all the common interests of life. By this, God lived among his people. When we see, in a Jewish synagogue, the book of the law solemnly taken out of the recess which represents the Holy of Holies of the ancient Temple, and carried round among the adoring congregation, we have an image of what the law was in its intention, the righteousness of God permeating the life of the nation. It is true that this ideal was but very partially attained, even at the best, and that through forsaking the true law the nation was ruined; but the complaints of the Psalmists and prophets show that in the conscience of the nation the true ideal was present; the social law was the law of God. And instances, such as we find in the beautiful idyll of Ruth, or in the noble refusal of Naboth to sell the inheritance of his fathers, or in the appeal of Jeremiah (xxxiv.) and of Nehemiah (v.) to the wealthy in the matters of debts and mortgages, show that the ideal was at least not wholly inoperative. Indeed, when we remember that the larger number of the kings of Judah are said to have served the Lord, which implies the enforcement of the law, we may believe that the oppression, against which we find such vehement protests in the Psalms and the prophets, was the exception, and that the good social customs of the law prevailed very widely, especially in the country districts.

It has often been pointed out how the Psalmists and prophets contrast the ceremonial with the moral law. But, perhaps, hardly sufficient stress has been laid on the great importance attached by them to the law of social relations. As regards the ceremonial law, it is true that in its forms it was more evanescent than the rest. It was, in its detailed arrangements, in all probability the product of the age immediately after the return from Babylon, though the elements of it had been present throughout the history. It was in itself but a shadow of things to come. But the great idea of holiness on which it is grounded, with the subsidiary ideas of the confession of sin, of reconciliation and self-sacrifice and adoration, go beyond the law of right relations, or, it may be truer to say, sublimate it and carry it to a higher sphere. They prevent the moral and social law from lapsing into a list of formal regulations. And, if we include the feasts in the ceremonial law, we can see how, at least after the exile, they became the most potent instruments of upholding good social relations. Psalm cxxii., which represents the tribes coming up from various parts of the country, and rejoicing that their feet shall stand in the gates of Jerusalem, speaks of the Prince, and the law courts, and the Temple, and the great social gatherings, realizing them all as instinct with the divine, bound together in unity by the indwelling of God.

But the ceremonial law has passed away, and it is only by a doubtful analogy that anything similar can be restored in the Christian dispensation. Of the moral law of the Decalogue it is unnecessary to speak. That it had the most complete adherence of the Psalmists and Prophets we cannot doubt. But it may well be asked whether the ten commandments by themselves were sufficient to be their meditation all the day. The writer of Psalm cxix., for instance, speaks of statutes, laws, judgments, which seem to indicate a set of detailed enactments; and we may therefore believe that he had before him the laws of Moses as we find them in the Book of the Covenant in Exodus and as adapted to a later time in Deuteronomy. If in addition to these he had Leviticus in his mind, it is clear that he laid little stress upon it. Ceremonies are just alluded to, and no more. They must have been felt to be quite in a secondary place. But the whole body of legal provisions for the social welfare of the people were reckoned as embodying the Divine justice and love. It was said by a great writer on English law in the last generation that the law of England was an extension of the ten commandments; and it is in a similar sense that all the Mosaic legislation, though developed at a later time, could be felt to be from God. "The Lord spake it unto Moses," not in so many words, but in principle.

It was the duty of the rulers — kings at the capital or the Shophetim, or judges in the various towns and villages throughout the land — to enforce this law; and David was traditionally believed to have been the model of one who gave effect to it. When we read the story of the woman of Tekoah, or the supposititious case brought before him by Nathan, we can realize what happened when "the King sat in the gate" and all had access to him. The divine principle on which the law was founded, rather than anything like our statute or case law, would be that on which his decisions were founded: but we may well believe that the "last words" attributed to him represent his principle of action: "He that ruleth men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." This was felt to be the moral power by which the nation was held together. The withdrawal of it under Rehoboam rent it asunder: the non-observance of it by the later kings and rulers, who became the evil shepherds of the people, was the cause of all their calamities; for, when justice fails, the nation is ruined.

How important the social law was is evidenced by the whole of the history of Israel. We may explain in a perfectly natural way the fact that when the law was observed the nation prospered, that when it was neglected the nation fell. A simple agricultural people, bound together by mutual justice, would be at peace amongst themselves, and free generally from foreign entanglements, and strong, if the necessity came, for self-defense. And this was their condition when they adhered to the true God and his law. On the other hand the service of the false gods, which admitted of lust and injustice, ruined the country industrially and politically. There are two passages in the prophet Jeremiah which bring this before us vividly. In the one (ch. xxxiv.) the princes have oppressed the poorer men and reduced them to slavery, and they are induced by the prophet's appeals to restore them to liberty in accordance with the social law which demanded that the Hebrew slave should go free on the seventh year (Exod. xxiii.); but afterwards they break their word, and resume their oppressive attitude. This, the prophet sees, will most surely bring ruin; and that ruin is the result of God's displeasure. The other is his condemnation of Jehoiakim (xxii. 15), who had neglected his duty as the enforcer of the law, and had cared only for his own luxury. "Shalt thou reign because thou closest thyself in cedar? Did not thy father [Josiah] eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well with him: was not this to know me, saith the Lord?" To care for the poor was, in the prophet's estimation, to know God.

The social bearing, then, of the law and history of the Jews is evident, and I will point out at the close of this lecture how it may be applied to our own social state. But the pressing question is, How far the New Testament carries us along the same path; how far it would deviate. I think we may say that in this the words of Christ fully apply: "I came not to destroy, but to fulfill."

It may be thought that in the interval between the Old and New Testaments the situation had been entirely altered, that the Jews were no longer a self-governing people, and that their law consequently was in abeyance; that, therefore, the ecclesia or congregation of Israel was no longer a political body, but confined to public worship and its narrow circle of interests; that it was, as has been said, no longer a nation, but a church (giving to the word church the more limited meaning of later times). But there is much to be said against this. In the first place, Eastern modes of government permit a much larger range of power to local communities than do the Western; and especially to religious communities. Even now, in Turkey, the Maronite or Syrian or Armenian churches have a considerable range of political power, and their chiefs are political as well as religious officers. Similarly, we see that, in the beginning of the Captivity, a Jewish governor was appointed for those who remained in Palestine. The Persian system of satraps was no doubt more drastic and left less local power. Yet the appointment of a Jewish prince, Zerubbabel, and afterwards of a Jewish Tishatha, Nehemiah, shows that there was no intention of substituting Persian law for that of the Jews. And we may believe that this laxer system, which would allow greater play to local institutions, remained under the Persian and even the Macedonian rule. It was Antiochus Epiphanes, in the second century before Christ, who first attempted any serious interference with the social customs and religion of the Jews; and it was this interference which led to the revolt of the Maccabees. That revolt issued in a complete independence, which endured under the Asmonean princes till the Roman rule began. But the Roman rule varied greatly in its stringency; and the Herods who bore sway under it professed the Jewish faith, which could not be dissociated from the customs of the Mosaic law. Even where a cause came before a Roman judge, he would take into consideration the laws and customs of the Jews: we find both Claudius Lysias and Festus desiring to be informed on such points when dealing with the case of St. Paul. We may compare with this the deference to Hindoo customs in the administration of justice by English judges in India. The Sanhedrin also claimed a complete power, even of life and death, and retained a large part of it to the end, a power which found its counterpart in the local organizations of the synagogues all through the country. We may say, therefore, that the Jews retained at the Christian era a considerable power to enforce their own law, especially on its social side; and that they had recent experience of a time in which they had had all the attributes of a sovereign, independent state.

When, then, our Lord began his ministry He was fully aware of the meaning which the words in which He announced his mission would bear to those who heard them. The kingdom of heaven would have a moral meaning, no doubt, as the reign of righteousness and love; but it would have a social meaning, as implying that the good customs of the divine law would once more come into observance; and a political meaning, since the words used seem to involve the expectation of a king who would restore the just Davidic administration. To the Galileans, to whom his teaching was first addressed, this would specially imply that they would no longer be despised and trampled on by the proud possessors of power at Jerusalem: they welcomed the day of deliverance, as the Germans hailed the voice of Luther, which gave a promise that their country would no longer be the despised milch-cow of the Papacy. How far did our Lord sanction these aspirations?

Evidently, the wish for a national ruler He entirely discountenanced. Their wish to make Him a king, which meant, no doubt, that He should repeat the attempts of men like Judas the Gaulonite, merely caused Him to retreat into some desert place. He would not sanction violence as the means of winning a kingdom which was before all things a kingdom of inward morality. Once only, when He could no longer be misunderstood, when He knew that in a few days He would suffer rejection and death, did He allow his Galilean sympathizers to acclaim Him as their king. But this act was one of great significance: it was evidently a sanction for their belief that both kingdom and kingship were capable of a real external embodiment. His primary care, of course, was for the formation of the inward spirit of righteousness in his followers, and this He explains in the Sermon on the Mount by showing that it is an inward righteousness, that of the heart, first and above all, and that it is one which involves self-denial, self-renunciation — on which He dwells more and more as the end draws near. But He shows himself alive to the fact that this inward spirit must work itself out into external acts and social relations, of which the social law of Israel was at hand to furnish the type.

It would have been contrary to the principles of Christ's teaching that He should lay down the form which the society of his disciples should take. But it is as contrary to these principles to affirm that He forbade them to organize themselves as families or municipalities or nations, as to affirm that He meant to impose any special form of these institutions upon them. The principle of rule, of order, and discipline, as was said by Pearson in commenting on the article Church in the creed, is alone divine: the manner in which it should be exercised depends on the actual circumstances in which the Christian community is placed.

The cardinal words of Christ's teaching are the kingdom and righteousness. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." I have touched on the first of these. I ask now what would be the idea of righteousness which would be present in his mind and in that of his hearers? Surely, it could be no other than that of which they were reading continually in the synagogues, that is, the idea of social beneficence. It was this which

He proclaimed in the synagogue of Nazareth and said that it was now fulfilled in their ears. "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and the recovery of sight to the blind, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." This was the new jubilee year introduced by the Son of God, the festival of the consummation of all those loving social relations which the ancient law had established. It is true that these relations must never be outward relations merely. The inward freedom was much more than the freedom from external servitude. But it is not true that, among men, living as men must in society, the inward feeling has no external expression. The free man must act out his freedom and win both social and public sanction for it. The beneficent man must show his beneficence over the whole range of his possible action.

Accordingly, our Lord says distinctly, it is more possible that heaven and earth should pass than that one jot or tittle of the law should fail till all be fulfilled; and, when He continues his exposition of the law, He says that the righteousness of his followers must exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, otherwise they will not even enter the kingdom; implying, surely, that there is a real kingdom and a real, that is a social, righteousness. And He proceeds to give typical instances of this, such as never to offend the little ones, that is, to have special regard to the young, the simple ones, the weaker classes: or to refrain from violent contemptuous words, which break up social unity: or to cut off our own members rather than practice greed and lust: and, above all, to be generous, giving freely, accepting wrongs that are done to us, not exacting that those among whom we are living should show themselves specially good men before we will help them, but rather trusting that kindness may win them: "So ye shall be the children of your Father, for He maketh his sun to rise upon the evil and the good, and sendeth his rain upon the just and upon the unjust."

In these and similar sayings we see the establishment of social relations, not in a merely legal way, but on the principles of faith and love, yet in entire harmony with the loving righteousness which pervaded the social law of Israel. And with this agrees the whole tenor of the life of Christ. The three great religious duties of the Jews, almsgiving, fasting, and prayer, He accepts fully, and urges them on his followers, only purifying them from formalism. His miracles are not to be viewed in relation to physical laws, about which the evangelists knew little or nothing, but to the bodies and souls of men: they were good works, the evidences of a supreme beneficence, by one who "went about doing good." The parables, especially those relating to the common life of men, the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, all breathe the same spirit of social kindness, the pardon of wrongdoing, the lifting up of the weak. When He sends his disciples on their first and typical journey to announce the Kingdom of God, the charge He gives them is still that of social kindness. Heal the sick, cast out devils, raise the dead, heal the leper; freely ye have received, freely give. This is the interpretation of the words, "As ye go proclaim, saying, the Kingdom of God is come." So to the disciples of the Baptist the evidence is given. Tell John what ye see and hear: "the blind receive their sight . . .

and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."

If then we ask further, how far this principle of beneficence was to have its issue in custom or in positive law, or how far it was to be sanctioned by external rule and force, the answer must be that this was left to the action of time and circumstance, which are also the ordinance of God, and to the promptings of good sense and right judgment, which are the voice of the Holy Spirit. Nothing is prejudged: but all is to be guided by the master principle of justice and beneficence. Yet evidently the principles and the illustrations given of them are such as must influence both custom and legislation, and have done so wherever Christianity has come in. The marriage relation, for instance, in which the principle of our Lord's words is that the weaker sex should have its rights, and should not be subject to male caprice, must be influenced by the spirit of his words rather than by logical inferences from the letter of them. The mode in which quarrels should be settled must be in accordance with the teaching of Matt. xviii., that is, that we should be as little as possible judges in our own cause, which leads to the recourse to friendly advice, or to just courts of law, or to the principle of arbitration. The words which describe our Lord's own social attitude, "The son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister," give us the principle on which we may claim the service of all in the cause of all, whether in benevolence or in civic duty, in taxation or conscription. The denunciations of mere selfish wealth are a sanction for the constant effort towards social equality.

Now, if we pass from Christ to the Church, in which his spirit manifested itself, we find this social bearing at once acknowledged. It was a community of brothers. They freely imparted to one another: and it was this spirit, and the action growing out of it, which led to the first organization of the Church. I will not dwell upon the well known and alluring picture of the early Church at Jerusalem; but it is important to emphasize the fact that the care for the poor led to its organization. And when the next great crisis came, that of the admission of the Gentiles, it was signalized by the importance given to these acts of social kindness. The first act of communion between the Gentile Church at Antioch and the

Jewish Church at Jerusalem is the sending of alms to the elders at Jerusalem by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. Either at that time or at his next visit, when the compact was made between Paul and the Three that the one should go to the Circumcision and the other to the Gentile, the pledge of union was the same link of social beneficence: "Only they would that we should remember the poor, the same which I also was forward to do." And we know how earnestly St. Paul labored in the fulfillment of this undertaking. We may observe further that in the Epistles this side of the Christian life is always prominent. To the Thessalonians, in the very first group of his Epistles, he urges the duty of honorable independence in many matters, putting himself forward as an example. In the second group he spends a large part of the Epistle in the exhortation to generous gifts for the poor at Jerusalem: of the other two groups I will speak in a moment. But great stress should be laid on his speech to the elders at Ephesus, where his exhortation to them is specially connected with their social and eleëmosynary character. He is himself the example of the generous labor which enables a man to help others: "These hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me." "I have coveted no man's gold or apparel." "Ye ought so to labor and to support the weak, and to remember the saying of the Lord Jesus which He spake: It is more blessed to give than to receive." It is pertinent to observe how the natural development of the Church bears witness to this. The earliest functions, which were prominent in the time of St. Paul, were those of the apostles and prophets, pastors and teachers, while the bishops and deacons who had to do with the social and eleemosynary work, are only mentioned in the Epistle to the Philippians, — the one which was written to acknowledge the receipt of the Church's gift to St. Paul: in the document called "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles to the Gentiles," which is commonly referred to as the Didachè, the prophets, apostles, and teachers are still thought of as the highest, though their influence is visibly waning, and the bishops and deacons, the social officers, are commended for honor because they also exercise some of the prophetic gifts; but later on the earlier class of leaders disappears, and those who administered and ruled became supreme.

We see this especially in the Pastoral Epistles. There the social arrangements of the Church come still more into prominence; the deacons and deaconesses who have to do with these arrangements, and the bishops who superintend them, are the special subjects of the apostolic injunctions; the rich are warned against selfishness, and charged to be rich in good works and willing to communicate their good things to others. And the government or ruling which springs out of these circumstances is evidently the chief concern of the officers of the Church, whether, as bishops, they have the general direction and the special care of the funds of the Society, or whether, as elders — a more general term — they are occupied mainly with discipline. For the well known and controverted text about the elders who rule well does not imply that a special class of elders were ruling elders, but that all were rulers, all occupied with the social work of the community, while some specially labored in the word and in teaching. It would seem that, as far as official organization goes, the Church of the Bible was organized on the opposite principle from that which prevails amongst us. We restrict teaching and prayer in the congregation to the official minister, and consider the social and charitable work as a secondary matter which any one or no one may engage in. In the early Church the officers were charged primarily with the affairs of the Church as a social body, while, for a long time at least, the work of prayer and exhortation was free to all the members.

We must glance, before concluding this sketch of the social bearing of the Bible, at the testimony of its last book, the Revelation of St. John. It begins with the messages to the churches; it ends with the picture of the Holy City; and it is to this city that the long avenue of judgments, of plagues, of convulsions of nature and of society leads up. It stands in contrast with great Babylon, the image of greedy and callous wealth, among the wares of which are the souls of men. And though the picture is that of sensuous imagery, as all poetry must be, we feel that the gates of pearl and the streets of gold, and the city lying foursquare, are the images of a splendid society, pure and loving and complete. It is not without significance for us, "upon whom the ends of the world have come," that the Bible, which begins with a garden, ends with a city. We are apt to say that God made the country and man the town. But we should more follow the teaching of the Bible if, like Socrates — who said that it was not the flowers and the fountains from which he could learn, but the men within the city — we should say that it is God who through man made the city. It is a vain thing to go back upon human progress. The industrial revolution which has made our great cities, and which through them supplies the needs of mankind, is part of God's Providence; and what we have to do, the real task of our generation, is to face the problems which city life presents, applying to them the light which the Bible gives us, and determining that, so far as in us lies, and by the power of God and of Christ, London and New York shall not be as Babylon, but as the New Jersualem.

There are two points which we may shortly discuss in reference to the social influence of the Bible in its application to our own social state.

The first of these may be stated, I hope not irreverently, in the question: Was Christ a socialist? It is not uncommon with men who look upon Him, so to speak, from without, to claim his teaching as socialistic: and at first sight it may seem to be so. Such phrases as "Blessed are ye poor," "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," "Give to him that asketh thee," "The beggar died and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died and was buried, and in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment," — seem to have in them something of the spirit of socialism, that is, of the spirit which would aim at altering men's external conditions by some peremptory means, and would in a literal sense put down the mighty and exalt the humble. M. Renan has endeavored to trace what I may call the pedigree of the word meek, which is applied to the people of Israel in the Psalms and is enshrined in the Beatitudes of the Gospel. He thinks that in the time of the later kings of Judah, beginning from Hezekiah, when Jerusalem became more definitely the religious centre of the nation, a class of men was formed who frequented the purlieus of the Temple, similar to the class which may be found round some of the great churches in Roman Catholic countries, attending all the services, and largely depending on the alms of the worshipers. This class, who had the title of Anavim, or the meek, were the moral ancestors of the Ebionim, or poor ones, of the first century, from whom the heretical Judaizing sect of the Ebionites took their names. The Anavim, from their constant attendance at the Temple, formed a religious class or sect, with opinions of their own, claiming the special favor of Jehovah; and by degrees came to be considered a sort of type of the national character. To them Renan attributes the sentiments which we find in many of the Psalms, of which Psa. xxxvii. may be taken as the chief example, the Psalm in which occurs the verse, "The meek spirited shall possess the earth, and shall rejoice in the abundance of peace." There is a tone of complaint against the pride and exactions of the rich, and of faith in God's special favor to themselves; and a confident expectation that by some judgment or revolution these conditions will be reversed; the proud rich "will be cut off as the grass and withered like the green herb," and the Anavim will enter into their place. This character or tone of mind came, Renan thinks, to be accepted as the right or orthodox tone for the nation, so that we have such expressions applied to Israel as that of Psa. cxliv. "He will beautify the meek with salvation." The Anavim, he considers, became "the poor," "the meek" of Gospel times, and upon them, that is, those who represented this tone or spirit, the blessing of Christ was pronounced. The teaching flowing from this would comprehend such commands as "Give alms of such things as ye have and all things are clear unto you," or the command to the young ruler to sell all and give to the poor, or the parable of Dives and Lazarus; and the doctrine of the kingdom would be the assurance that the Anavim and Ebionim and those who partook of their spirit would have a time of happiness by which their present sufferings would be compensated. With this he would join the Epistle of St. James, which has an Ebionite appearance, and is full of complaints against the proud and wealthy. "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low, because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away; . . . so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you."

I think a sound judgment would say that the true teaching both of the Old and of the New Testament lays a much greater stress on the dangers of wealth than we are apt to do; that it has a special feeling of compassion for the disinherited of the earth; that it brings out, in contrast to the morality of Greece or Rome, the value of humility and meekness, and the virtues which often are found among the poor, submission and resignation and dependence upon God. But the low-spirited pauper spirit is alien to the religion of the Bible; still more, the degrading, envious tendency, which would bring all down to a low level, such as the lower socialism represents, as it is pictured for us in such a poem as Mrs. Browning's "Aurora Leigh." It would seem as if all that such socialism aimed at was that man should eat and drink more plentifully and be more pleasantly housed and bedded; and that all thought of the higher life of culture or of moral elevation was left out of sight. We should be very slow to believe that there was in our Lord's teaching any complicity whatever with such a tendency. On the other hand, there is enough in the passages we have touched on to make us revise some of our estimates. It is unquestionable that meekness came to be the chosen characteristic of Israel, and that our Lord ratified this when he fulfilled the prophecy of Zechariah, and rode as the king of Israel in the character of meekness. And we may well ask whether Christians in themselves and in their teaching lay the due stress upon this side of the Christian character; and still more whether in their social action they realize that it is with the meek, not with the self-assertive, that God dwells, and that it is for the elevation of the humble and the poor that the Christian Church is bound above all things to labor. That is the social question for the solution of which we must be seeking day by day, in a spirit of indulgent kindness towards those who may still be called the meek of the earth.

The other question which is presented by the Bible as a book of social righteousness is, how far its teachings are to be taken in a literal and absolute sense. I confess I can hardly read with patience such books as those of Tolstoi, which, taking Christ's words as literal commands, draw from them inferences of absolute anarchy. They seem to me to misunderstand the nature of our Lord's teaching, which advisedly uses paradox and trusts to us to interpret it, and to impute to Christ a lack of common sense. The true answer must be, first, that it is a spirit and a stimulus which Christ meant to give rather than direct rules for our guidance: and, secondly, that in the application of this spirit to action the alteration of times and customs must be taken into account. It has sometimes been a stumbling block to men to read of our Lord driving out the buyers and sellers from the Temple: but it is just such an action as would not be thought strange in one of the Dervishes in the East at the present day. Professor Vambéry describes actions of his own of a similar kind, when he personated a Dervish among some of the Turkoman tribes. On one occasion, when he came into the presence of one of their Emirs, and was resisted in his approach to him, he took off his slipper and dealt a blow to the man who opposed him and sat down unbidden at the Emir's right hand. Such an action would rouse nothing but indignation in us; but it won him acceptance with the men with whom he was dealing. It is said that the late Mr. Francis Newman declared that he could not accept

Christ's social teachings because He evidently knew nothing of political economy. But the principle of generosity and of interest in the weaker classes is what is essential; to which we must add the perfect reasonableness of our Lord's attitude, and such words as these: "Why even of your own selves judge ye not that which is right?" If a man is possessed with a generous spirit of social redemption, all the studies which bear upon the welfare of the poor, all the economical and political sciences, receive an impulse which no mere utilitarianism can give them. May we not say that the pursuit of them becomes, like any endowment when it is sanctified, a gift of the Holy Spirit? It has been a stumbling block, again, to some good men, that there is no direct pronouncement, even in the Gospels or the Epistles, against such customs as slavery and polygamy. But the principle is there which must destroy them. The principle of justice, and the incessant aim at spiritual elevation which we find throughout the New Testament, are absolutely incompatible with practices which treat men as chattels and women as playthings. To have given the full application of the true principles either in the

East or the West in the first century would have been to excite a bitter and fruitless controversy, with at best revolutions and counter-revolutions. " Husbands, love your wives *as Christ* loved the Church," and " Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven," and " Servants, obey, not with eye-service as menpleasers, but in singleness of heart . . . for ye serve the Lord Christ," and " not now as a servant, but as a brother beloved," are sayings which lift us above controversy, and by their constant working insure the true result. And we may be sure that, though we may not see our way through social questions by any ready-made solution, such as universal pensions, or the rebuilding of all bad dwellings, or the confiscation of all fortunes above a certain value, or the passing over to the State of all industries, these questions will by patient thought and experiment be solved. It is by the gradual working of conviction, by the upward struggle of the people themselves, by experiments attempted here and there which show us where there is firm ground to stand on, that the great changes needed must be wrought out; and above all by the infusion into all social dealings of the spirit of unselfish Christian love.

But there are several points which we may touch upon as showing how suitable the Bible is, when rightly handled, to be the book of social reform.

1. The Bible speaks of men as one great family, "where there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond or free, male or female:" and we may surely add, neither rich nor poor, employer or employed, white man or colored. We have all the same interest in the promotion of justice and loving-kindness, and we must move towards its realization together. The tendency of men in the present day is towards aggregation, and the Bible speaks of men, not as separate individuals, but as aggregate. Even in the Psalms, which seem to describe individual experiences, it is the opinion of one of our foremost critics that the individual speaks in the name of the nation. Our Lord spoke to great masses of men on the mount or on the seashore; and, though He dealt with individuals also, it was the heart of the people which He sought to turn to God, it was to the masses that He preached God's fatherhood and the brotherhood of men. It

was the nation and its capital over which He wept because it knew not its day of visitation. It was to the masses gathered from all parts of the world that St. Peter preached at Pentecost: it was to masses of men, though they were still in heathenism, that St. Paul preached from Mars Hill the sublime truths of all men bearing the divine image, and of their moving and having their being in Him. It was not the Philippian jailer by himself who was converted and baptized, but all his household with him. And in later days the simple Saxons or Franks came in, not by ones and twos, but by thousands, to go where their chiefs were leading them. Ours is a day of great aggregates of population, and public sentiment flies from mouth to mouth, or from the printed sheet to thousands at once. We have looked mainly hitherto at the effects of the Bible on individuals, issuing in conversion and personal holiness, and these effects have been great. May we not expect far greater effects when its social character is revealed to classes and societies and nations?

2. The special moral feature of the masses is generosity and good nature. These are to be found in the Bible, and especially in the

teaching of our Lord, sublimated and connected with God and with heaven, but without losing their human character. We may have observed how, in public assemblies, any allusion to the Good Samaritan, or the Great Supper from which none are excluded, or the social precepts of the Sermon on the Mount is accepted as touching the popular mind. Such words as "Give to him that asketh thee," or "If any man shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain," are eminently the suggestions of a good nature which has been impressed with a higher motive. And when religion is connected with gatherings like the harvest festivals, or some national thanksgiving, the harshness of life seems to be shamed away, and the kindly feelings of brotherhood are drawn out. It is of the character of the Bible to take the plain elements of human nature, and, acknowledging these, to graft upon them the fuller and nobler developments of religion. St. Paul at Lystra is thought to have taken a hymn of thanksgiving for the fruits of the earth in use among the simple though idolatrous people, and to have used this to draw men to the living God, whose bounteousness was witnessed by the harvest. And so we may hope that the kindly feelings which we find in the masses of men may pass into the higher sphere, and make an entrance for the deeper love of Christian sacrifice and for the sense of the fatherly goodness which is the source of all spiritual life.

3. The Bible is the book of forgiveness; and there is nothing which appeals to the masses of men so much as this. They are conscious, like the publicans with whom our Lord consorted, that they are not as they ought to be, and that they need forgiveness. Perhaps the preachers of religion have not been enough alive to this. We have made the gate of pardon too strait: we have not trusted enough to the general working of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man. But in such an appeal as I have touched upon, of the Bible to the mass of mankind, there is no feature which is more sure of acceptance than such teaching as that of the parable of the returning prodigal, or of that of the mote and the beam which forbids harsh judgments. Here also is the open door for the entrance of the Gospel. These parables and the teaching to which they belong are not restricted to

the individual application: they belong also to the wider sphere of God's dealings. There are prodigal classes and prodigal nations. The publicans and the heathen were in the Saviour's mind; and the message of the Bible to men in the future will be, like that of Elijah: "That this people may know that Thou art the Lord God, and that Thou hast turned their heart back again."

4. The Bible, we have said, gives principles not rules, and thus it frees us from dogmatism and formalism. It also prescribes neither method nor system, but only the spirit of mutual love. It leaves us free to adapt our principles freely to each successive stage of society. It is at home in a democracy as in a monarchy: it may be the inspirer of social movements of divers ages and stages, of trades' societies, of coöperative movements, of the higher socialism. But since the larger half of the Bible is the history of religion, not in a city like Athens, nor in an aggregate of cities like the Roman Empire, but in a nation, it seems to have a special affinity to our time, in which nationality is the chosen form of political society. The history of Israel has a peculiar application to nations like those

of our time, the dangers of which come from the dividing of classes, from the idolatry of wealth, from the materialism which breeds coarseness and callousness.

5. Lastly, the Bible is the book of hope. There is about us a pessimism which would be the death of social reform, a languid fatalism which when it sees decadence prepares at once to succumb to it. In a memorable work[1] on the future of national character written some ten years ago, we have the picture of a social state become flaccid and impotent, without interest in religion or politics, in literature or art, in science or practical inventions. It seemed enough to the gifted author to see the dangers, and at once to undergo the fascination of the precipice. But the Bible works always towards the future, in the Old Testament to the reign of the Messiah, in the New to the kingdom of God and the New Jerusalem. We are at the beginning, not the end of human endeavor. The new knowledge and appliances and locomotion of our day are the commencement of a full entry

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[1] *National Life and Character, a Forecast*, by Charles H. Pearson. Macmillans: 1893.

upon our inheritance: and the perception of the social problem and of its urgency is the pledge to those who have the Bible in their hands of its complete and happy solution.

III

THE SACRAMENTS

So much has been made of the Sacraments, and so many disputes have arisen about them, that we are tempted to ask whether they really hold the paramount position which has been assigned to them in the system of Christian Ordinances by nearly every age of the Church. That they have been at times overvalued is true: and that they have been the subject of superstition. It is important, therefore, to observe that in our Lord's life and teaching they occupy quite a subordinate place — the supreme matter there is the spiritual and moral life, and all ordinances are merely accessory; and also that in the Epistles the mention of them is mainly allusive: there is no exhortation to comply with them except so far as baptism is the corollary to repentance and faith: they are taken as a matter of course. We must recall also the fact that our Lord himself did not baptize, and that St. Paul, though occasionally baptizing, placed this ordinance in a position of subordination to the proclamation of the Gospel: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." He saw the danger of its being turned to sectarian purposes. And further, we must notice that, in our Lord's mouth, except in his last command, baptism is used entirely for a spiritual experience. "I have a baptism to be baptized with," He says of himself; and to his disciples of the inner circle He puts the question, "Can ye drink of my cup and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" And, moreover, that the contrast is drawn by John the Baptist, not between his outward immersion and another immersion of higher significance, but between his baptism as an outward thing and the baptism of our Lord as a wholly spiritual thing: "I baptize with water, but he that cometh after me shall baptize with fire and the Holy Ghost," words which were repeated by our Lord just before his ascension when the command to baptize was given. We must observe also that the last of the Evangelists records the words of our Lord to Nicodemus, which, if they have any allusion to the outward baptism, must be taken as merely touching upon it as the ordinary practice, and at once drawing his hearer's attention away from any thought of an ordinance to that of being born of the Spirit from above. And to pursue this further; we may notice that St. John does not record the institution of either sacrament, though he dwells upon that which they signify: his report of our Lord's words about eating Him, or eating his flesh and drinking his blood, as synonymous with believing in Him, shows that the spiritual act and blessing is in no absolute manner dependent on the outward ordinance.

We may therefore be thankful that there is a body of Christians distinguished for their Christian simplicity and their good works, who have altogether discarded the use of outward sacraments. To deny them the Christian name and a place in the Christian Church would be to deny the Spirit of God. The Friends stand as a witness that the body of believers has complete power over the outward form. It is important to observe this, because there has been at times (and not least in our own time) a tendency to make the establishment of the sacraments the beginning of a new law of ordinances holding the same place in the Christian system which the ceremonial law held in the old dispensation. Circumcision, it was said, has been abrogated, but the new law of baptism has taken its place; and, it is hinted, as circumcision carried with it the whole apparatus of Jewish ordinances, so baptism carries with it the whole system of Christian ordinances, which thus gains a character of obligation. I have read sermons in which the doctrine of justification by faith was entirely confused by this supposition: and it is important that we should maintain the absolute character of faith and righteousness, the relative and subordinate character of ordinances, even of the two sacraments. As a matter of fact the Church has used its liberty very largely, and each of the sacraments has undergone such changes in its outward form that they would not be recognized at all by those who at first were subject to them. And we cannot but maintain that there may be good reasons, such as the superstitious or sectarian employment of them, or the tyrannous conditions imposed upon participation, which would justify Christian men in declining their use altogether.

It is necessary to make this assertion of liberty; but its result is only to show that no ordinance can be placed on a level with faith and righteousness as absolute and indispensable. The sacraments are part of the Church system and will always remain its central ordinances, the one guarding its portal, the others strengthening and supporting its whole fabric. But the freedom of their use and administration is essential for their bearing on social progress. I propose to touch first on the idea and meaning of sacraments generally, secondly on baptism, thirdly on the Lord's Supper, showing in each case their social importance.

I

It may be asked whether such symbols as the sacraments have not had their day. They abounded in the Jewish dispensation; they abounded in the Middle Ages, and in each case they became a yoke which men were unable to bear. Are they not out of place in a modern and progressive era? Is not this the age of the spirit and the time for plain speaking? Is not such plain speaking especially the need of the new democracy?

I would here draw your attention to a fact of the utmost importance, though often unrecognized, both in the sphere of worship and in that of life, on which I have said a few words in the first of these lectures. It is this, — that human nature is not merely rational and moved by appeals and arguments which are made by word of mouth. It is directed largely by instinct, which goes out into habit and is fed by habit in return; which works by unconscious or half-conscious impulses; which is fostered by training rather than by teaching; which is increased by impressions from without more than by conscious thought. We all do many things, some of them of great importance, hardly asking why we do them. We eat or drink or seek social converse without giving a reason for it; no one exerts a conscious act of reason in putting out his foot to walk. And, though this instinctive phase of life belongs largely to infancy and to immaturity, it remains with us more or less throughout life. And further, when we have reasoned out a matter, the truth which we have gained becomes a received principle, on which we act, but do not reason any more. Habit becomes an instinct, and the general habit or fashion sways us we hardly know why. The more we reflect on this, the more we see that, in the larger part of our life, we are not merely voluntary and rational agents, but led by unconscious, instinctive impressions. Every true teacher and ruler in whatsoever department must take account of this fact, otherwise he will go, and lead men, astray. Our Lord, then, while in his public teaching He constantly appeals to the reasoning faculty, and bids men judge of themselves what is right, and take notice of the signs of the times, yet, in the institution of the Church and the sacraments, recognizes the other element, the unconscious or instinctive side of human nature, that in which we are subject to training, to habit, to social forces, to impressions. In our Christian worship both these elements have their part. All that belongs to ritual and ceremony, and the influence of form and color and sound, of architecture, painting, colored glass, or music, and to the associations and impressions to which these so powerfully minister, appeals to the instinctive part of us: on the other hand, the prayers in the vernacular language, the instructions and exhortations of the pulpit, appeal to the reasoning and conscious faculties. The Eastern churches trust almost entirely to the former of these influences; they have a grand sacramental ritual and beautiful music, but hardly any preaching; the Church of Rome also mainly relies on these influences, as you may see at a Sunday mass, when a vast mass of ignorant people, not understanding a word of the Latin prayers, assist, and are conscious of a Divine presence, and go away awed and inspired; and on its discipline, which also is a training rather than a mental process. The Protestant churches have relied, perhaps too exclusively, on the appeal to the conscious reason.

As it is with worship, so it is with life; and it is of the utmost importance to show that Christian institutions, as an element of the general life, are grounded on the principles and working of human nature, and are not things thrust in by authority into an uncongenial environment. There are parts and times in our life in which we are dependent on reason and conscious effort; but there are others in which unconscious habit and instinct hold the chief place. And this last is the case especially in all social matters. It is not by an act of will that men become Englishmen or Americans, or, in many cases, inhabitants of our great cities. Even in their political or religious connections they are often swayed much more than they know by associations, education, or social station. We are subject here to the influence of public opinion and of fashion, the origin of which we hardly know: we partake of the spirit of the society to which we belong, and live, to a great extent, with its life rather than with any individual life of our own. Moreover, you find that throughout our lives signs have a great influence: they often mean more than words: they seem to concentrate a whole set of ideas or tendencies. The soldier's or the politician's flag fires him with enthusiasm: in it he sees concentrated the thought of country, of honor, of discipline, of union, of some great cause to which he would rally his countrymen; and its waving on high at the close of the contest is the signal of victory. And so it is in the more ordinary spheres of life. A shrug of the shoulders or a curl of the lip is often more expressive than a keen word of sarcasm or contempt. A kiss or a grasp of the hand touches us more than a statement of love or of good faith. Darwin has endeavored to trace some of these expressions of the emotions to their origin. But whether they can be thus traced or no, it is certain that to most of us their origin is unknown. They are signs, and nothing but signs, and yet they have a power beyond that of rational explanation. Moreover, when words fail us, it is a relief to *do* something which expresses our meaning. Words often confuse and sophisticate, when action is clear; and the wise and well-known saying, that when we are in doubt the best thing we can do is to take the next step forward, constantly shows us the power of an external act over the mind. Human nature craves something which we can touch and see. In the social democracies of the future we may be sure that this principle will have even a greater force than before. Men move in masses: they march with bands and scarfs and banners and badges. They love watchwords and party names as expressing their general adhesion. To sit down at a club feast or wear the distinctive dress of the society implies as much or more than a declaration of its principles. If therefore the Christian society is bound together by certain special signs, not merely by reasoned principles, it is in this eminently human and eminently social; and thus it shows itself well adapted to unite with, and to guide, those societies of the coming time which it desires to win for God.

It must be added that the sacramental principle, that is, the representation of the inward idea by the outward sign or action, is one which is to be seen in activity throughout the world. The visible universe itself is the outward manifestation of God, the "living robe of the Godhead," as Goethe called it, the body of Christ if Christ be truly the Word of God. And in human life each sphere and each commodity is the emblem of some idea or feeling of the humanity from which it sprang. In the painting you see the soul of the artist, in literature the heart of the writer, in commerce the enterprise of the merchant adventurer or the mariner: a magnificent building is, as we say, a grand conception. The whole world is one great natural sacrament, "the outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace." And in the Church system it is important to go beyond the prescribed act, to realize the principle as far-reaching and universal.

But, further, the sacramental principle in the Christian Church has a more definite and a more social object. It is the means or the attestation of incorporation into the body of believers. This is the special inward and spiritual grace which our ordinances convey to us. I need not point out that this membership in a body is that which the democratic development of society requires. The right of citizenship is not merely the right to certain advantages, but the incorporation into the city or the nation, with the social standing and dignity which it brings. Was not a justification sought for the claims which led to the recent war in South Africa by the demand that the resident workers should be members of the commonwealth and not Helots? St. Paul awakened a thrill in the Gentile converts of Ephesus when he said that they were fellow citizens with the Saints, members of the household of God, no longer strangers and foreigners.

But, if the principle is so large a one, why, it may be asked, should we only recognize as sacraments the two acts of baptism and the Lord's Supper. It may be answered, as Augustine answered, that numerous ordinances become a burden. He says that the old covenant had many such signs, and that the wisdom of our Saviour was shown in this, that He selected two simple rites, easy to be practiced, as sufficient for all his followers. We might, indeed, extend the use of the word legitimately. The largest body of our fellow Christians recognize seven acts as sacraments. They all of them are outward signs of an inward spiritual grace, and they all are signs of incorporation into the society and its component parts. The Reformation put them aside because it felt it necessary to adhere to those signs which Christ himself had sanctioned : but still more, I think, because the seven sacraments were the centre of a burdensome mass of ordinances which, as Luther showed in his primary treatises on Christian liberty and the Church's captivity, had become an instrument of priestly tyranny, and, as Tyndale showed in his "Obedience of a Christian Man," had denaturalized the ordinances themselves and overlaid human life with an unreal clericalism. But it would be quite wrong to deny to these other ordinances, and indeed to all the acts by which we endeavor to body forth to ourselves the unseen and eternal, some true sacramental meaning and efficacy. The two sacraments are the centre of a Church system which is sacramental in all its parts.

You will notice that both these sacraments are social acts. They imply the bond which unites the society, the bond of attachment to Christ which is the *ratio essendi* of the society; and also, as we must insist and reiterate, because it is being forgotten in the present day, and because on this depends their social efficacy, the bond which unites the members to one another. The sacraments, also, have rightly been called federal acts: they are the seal of a mutual treaty or understanding, the prime assumption of the Christian calling, by which Christ's servants recognize one another and pledge themselves mutually to continue his redemptive work. And this social destination of the sacraments must be of a piece with the large objects of the Christian Society itself. If the Church is, as has been maintained, an expansive society, tending to embrace the whole of mankind, then the Sacraments must be held to incorporate us into this expansive body, and to pledge us, not merely to brotherly relations with a larger or smaller body of fellow-mystics, partakers of a treasure unknown to others, but to work with them for the larger society which is passing more and more into the Christian state, that is, for the social regeneration of mankind. This is what St. Paul spoke of as the fellowship of the mystery, which Christians are to make all men know.

Next, we observe that the two sacraments are not in the proper sense acts of worship, though they are often called so. To immerse a person in water or sprinkle him with it is not prayer ; nor is the drinking of wine and eating of bread. These are actions which have gained a religious significance from the remembrance of our Saviour and from the special meaning He gave to them, and from the fact that they are the means of introducing us into the company of those who are united to Him, or maintaining us in it. They are, and usually have been, though not universally, accompanied by prayer : they involve the deepest reverence for Christ, who lives and acts in the Church as his own body. But they belong to the domain of action rather than of prayer. They are ordinances of the Christian life.

The word sacrament itself is of mixed import. It is used by the Latin Fathers in a very general sense. All the symbols and sacrifices of the Old Testament are with them sacraments; and, as I have mentioned, Augustine calls attention to the wisdom of our Lord in selecting two simple acts out of the mass of rites which existed in the Jewish Church. But they extend the meaning of the word still further; any strong expression of Scripture is spoken of by Jerome as a sacrament, and so is any solemn word which conveys a deep spiritual impression. In his Vulgate translation of the New Testament, we have such expressions as "The sacrament of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand" (Rev. i. 20), or "The Sacrament of the woman and of the beast which carrieth her" (Rev. xvii. 7), or 1 Tim. iii. 16, "Great is the sacrament of godliness," or Eph. v. 22, of marriage, "This is a great sacrament." But where we first meet with the word in history, in Pliny's letter to Trajan about the Christians, it is applied to the Lord's Supper taken as a solemn social adjuration. To the Roman it meant the military oath which each soldier took, on enlisting, to his commander: and the description given of it by Pliny shows that he understood it as being a solemn pledge by which Christian votaries bound themselves to him and to one another. This we may take to be the sense in which the Church itself conceived of it: and we see at once its vast social importance. As the Roman soldier pledged himself to serve his commander, the representative of the imperial majesty, and to support his comrades in this service, so the servant of Christ pledges himself to be faithful to his Lord, to render loyal obedience, to submit to discipline, to aid his fellow-workers in the cause of Christ, to war against his enemies, and to bring in his kingdom.

II

Let us now apply these general statements to the sacrament of baptism. It is first a washing or cleansing, representing that the person baptized has been cleansed from sin; secondly, a symbol of death and resurrection, denoting that the baptized person has forsaken utterly his former evil state, and has risen again to a new and better life; and thirdly, an incorporation into Christ and his body the Church.

We speak of baptism as instituted or ordained by Christ. But it would be more proper to say that it was appropriated by him and received his special stamp. For it was well known before the time of Christ, just as circumcision was practiced by many nations and only adopted by the Israelites as a sign of the covenant; or as the rainbow, which has existed since first the rays of light were refracted from the raindrops, was appropriated as an emblem of God's promise. The Jews indeed did not baptize their children, because they held that the nation had been baptized as a whole in the solemn washing recorded in Exodus xix. 14, before the giving of the law; and that the children of a baptized family did not need this means of incorporation. But when a proselyte desired admission he was baptized: and baptism became also the means of admission into any of the sects which sought to renew the spiritual life of Israel. The Essenes, in their over-wrought efforts for ceremonial purity, were baptized again and again. Each day, about eleven o'clock, after their work, they solemnly joined together in a sacred bath, after which, clad in white robes, they entered the refectory with great solemnity to partake of the common meal. And the point of John's baptism was that he called upon the whole nation to accept it. It was vain for them to appeal to their forefathers. The nation had become apostate, and every member of it needed regeneration and reincorporation into the community of the people of God. Our Lord's disciples began the same practice, with their Master's sanction, though He, significantly, did not baptize, and though we do not read of the Apostles being baptized nor of our Lord enjoining baptism upon those whom He called to follow Him. When, therefore, we read that our Lord, just before his final departure, bade his followers go and make disciples of all nations and baptize them, we must not think of this as the invention of some new thing, but rather of its adaptation to new circumstances. The vast extension of the Church which was contemplated demanded a new social bond. That of Israel, the ceremonies of the law, was no longer available, — we see that the attempt to enforce it in the time of St. Paul was found impossible: and baptism was made universal and charged with a new significance. We must take our Lord's saying not as meaning, "I institute a new ordinance," but "Use the old ordinance, not for Israel only, but for all nations, and use it as expressing the universal name and character of God — no longer Jehovah of Hosts, but Father and Son and Holy Ghost."

If we dwell for a moment on the words of Christ, we shall see how they assist us in presenting the acceptance of Christianity as the great social regeneration.

1. Those baptized are to be made disciples, and to be a disciple is to be a subject of the kingdom: "Thou sayest that I am a king — I came to bear witness for the truth; he that is of the truth heareth my voice" — that is, becomes my spiritual subject. We have here incorporation into a kingdom. This has been called the enlightenment or the regeneration: and though these words may not be desirable ones to use for many reasons, yet this is true of Christian discipleship, that it changes the moral basis or primary assumptions of a man's life. The man who accepts Christ as his master and teacher necessarily refers to Him as the standard of judgment; by Him the ordinary standard, which is that of selfishness in one of its many

forms, has been forsaken; and instead of this Christ's teaching of universal, self-renouncing love has been accepted. He has joined a society, and the primary assumption of that society is that its members live to seek the kingdom and righteousness of God, that is, to promote social good in their master's name.

2. The command is to baptize all nations: and this implies in the first place that the society is universal — it comprehends not the Jews only, but mankind: and, as we may apply it, all classes and races — it is the Church of humanity. But must we not say also that it implies, not individuals only, but communities? If it is true, as I have endeavored to maintain, that there is what may be called a "mind of the community" which constitutes the primary moral assumption in the minds of the individuals who compose it, is it not possible that the community should change its mind, and is there not a repentance for bodies of men as well as for individuals? Who can deny this who has witnessed great revulsions of popular feeling or read of them in history, such as that at the time of the Reformation, when nations revolted from the mediæ-

val system, or that of Japan in its embrace of Western civilization? It is to be observed also that the Gospel was first offered to the Jews as a nation: "Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with Abraham." And in St. Paul's preaching, not individuals only, but families were brought in and baptized. The promise was not "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved," but "thou shalt be saved, *and thy house*." The children and slaves of the family were willing to go with the master, and they were received and baptized and became the family church. Perhaps we may not be bound to condemn the action of our Saxon forefathers when, under the preaching of Augustine of Canterbury, 10,000 Saxons are said to have been baptized in the Swale in a single day. Perhaps the conversion of India or China, or the desired alteration of the attitude of the masses in the West, may be upon a similar scale.

3. I have touched upon the threefold name in which Christian baptism was to be bestowed. But name implies character. We must therefore understand it, not in a kind of mythological sense, but in the sense of

moral relations. God is Father and Son and Holy Spirit all in one. The first is the guarantee for the unity of the human family under a power beneficent and fatherly; the second is the guarantee of family affection through Him who gave Himself up for men; the third gives the character of holiness and spirituality which must be the aim of every worthy society.

4. There is no form presented; baptism may be by immersion or by sprinkling, of children or adults, by specially chosen ministers or by any member of the community, with prayer or by the simple act. For baptism is the witness of a universal obligation. It is the witness that men are coming to recognize what they ought to be. This inclusiveness is wanted greatly in the present day; and it is especially wanted for social progress. There is nothing which hinders that progress, or weakens those who promote it, so much as our divisions, in which we acquiesce much too readily. If baptism can be, not the admission to a sect, not a thing which has a bar on each side, to shut us out unless we can pronounce the catchword, and to shut us in from all communion with those

who do not pronounce it, but an open door where we can go in and out freely, it may lead to the union of all true men in one society of mutual well-doing. Let us endeavor to see how this may come about.

(1.) We have said that baptism is the sacrament of incorporation. All those who receive it are one body, bound to each other by ties of mutual obligation. This bond is essentially democratic, and even in the best sense socialistic, for it certainly demands that equality which is the essence of democracy; and it includes the socialist maxim, so far as any meaning can be given to it: "From each according to his capacity, to each according to his need." The method of enforcing this maxim is not compulsory, as with socialism: yet in a large community law and taxation can only be voluntary in the sense that each citizen votes freely: and law and taxation must come in to give effect to social reform. If our contention is true, that human nature is half unconscious and instinctive in its action, then it is impossible that progress should depend wholly on the action of individual on individual. The poorest classes who are massed in our towns are those whose individuality is least free; they are and must be largely dependent on the action of the community. Many of these never have had a chance in life; political economists, like Ricardo, have confessed that, on their principles, the lower class of workers never can rise, that their wages will always be reckoned by that which will barely support existence. Some help or effort on the part of the community into which they are incorporated is needed to give them a dead lift, and help them to that which has been called by Kidd "an equality of opportunity." It is this which the better and more moderate socialism seeks to accomplish: the poorer and weaker class in our brotherhood have a claim on us for it: and those who are more independent in their circumstances should feel on their side the obligation which their incorporation implies, to seek out and give effect to the means by which it may be accomplished, at whatever sacrifice to themselves.

(2.) The dedication to Christ which baptism implies is a dedication to holiness of life. "As many of you as are baptized into Christ have put on Christ." What follows, then, upon this? Not an unearthly kind of life, such as is attained by a few cloistered souls, and from which plain humanity revolts as being unnatural and impossible; not an exotic plant "too bright or good for human nature's daily food;" but the life of brotherly equality and mutual succor, "where there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, but Christ is all and in all." To grow into the image of Christ is to become like to One who went about doing good, who proclaimed a kingdom of brotherly beneficence, who fulfilled the law, that is, the law of social relations, the law which succored the poor and needy, the fatherless and the widow. The holiness of the Gospel is not a lonely, other-world piety, but union in the spirit of Him who, as he described Himself, came eating and drinking, mixing with the common cares and joys of common men, healing men and supplying their bodily wants so as to lift them up, body and soul together, and to make them partakers both of the temporal and of the spiritual bounty of God. The Christ into whom we are baptized is the great inspirer of social reform.

(3.) Baptism is the sacrament of cleansing. It is usual to say: the outward cleansing of the flesh is the type of the inward cleansing of the soul. But the reverse process is also true. The clean soul demands clean surroundings. Cleanliness follows upon godliness. "Draw near," says the Epistle to the Hebrews, "having your hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and your bodies washed with pure water." One of the greatest requirements of our day is sanitation. We want clean bodies, clean homes, clean streets, and the baths and washhouses and fountains and good drainage by which these are secured: these better conditions of life are the proper accompaniments of the clean heart which we ask God to create in us, and they greatly aid in its preservation. The public health is a part of the social advance which is the task of the Church of our day.

III

I turn now to the other sacrament, that of the Lord's Supper: and I venture to say that the first thought which its name ought to excite in us is that it is a federal act, binding together the head and the members in one community; for it presents to us a common meal, a loving fellowship, which carries us back to those twelve men gathered together in the upper room, "with hearts," according to the touching words of Carlyle, "God-initiated into a divine depth of sorrow;" — sorrow which was nevertheless to be turned into joy, and the feast to become an Eucharist. "We are assured by it," says a prayer familiar to some of us, "that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people." I venture to say that this social side of the Lord's Supper is its chief intention. It has been lost sight of in a great measure, and needs a clear light to rediscover and restore it. I also venture to say that it is an abuse of this ordinance where it is made the instrument of an esoteric and individualistic pietism, where each man asks, "What good shall I get from it for my own soul?" and where it is received again and again by small knots of leisurely worshipers with little thought of the general good, in ways and at times in which it is quite impossible that the mass of their fellow-men should join with them. The Lord's Supper, beyond all other ordinances, ought to aid in the furtherance of that social

Christianity which is the great need of our time.

Let me first call attention to the ideas which were held of it in the early, formative periods of the Church, as shown by the names by which it was designated. They all reflect its social purpose.

First, it is the Lord's Supper, the meal of the family of which Christ is the head. It was a perpetuation of the Paschal meal, only converted to Christian uses. At the Passover the head of the family gathered all its members together: not one was to be absent. The paschal lamb, the unleavened bread, the bitter herbs, the apparatus for a journey, all reminded them of the Exodus: and the father rehearsed the story of the deliverance of their nation from the bondage of Egypt. Our Lord, in like manner, gathered the Twelve as making up his family, and with them celebrated that Passover which with desire He had desired to eat with them before He suffered. At its close He gave it a special significance as the means of keeping Him in remembrance. He changed it from being a Jewish feast in memorial of the deliverance of the nation into a universal feast in memory of his death, which was the salvation of the world. But He by no means intended to alter its character as a social meal; and for a long time it retained the name and the character of the paschal feast.

This is brought out plainly in the passages in 1 Cor. x. and xi. in which St. Paul deals with the Lord's Supper. In the first of these he says: "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of (that is, the partaking in common, or sharing in) the body of Christ? And this body of Christ is not merely the mystic body of the personal Saviour: it is specifically the body of believers, of which He is the soul, and in which we have a share: "for," he says, "we, being many, are one body," like the loaf which is divided between us all. And where, in the second of these passages, he deals with the abuses in the celebration of the ordinance at Corinth, the chief point of his blame relates to this, that these abuses destroyed it *as* a communion. "This is not," he exclaims, "to eat *the Lord's* Supper!" Each of you takes before the rest his own supper; the rich shame the poor; you do not tarry the one for the other, as you would if the social obligation were present with you. Instead of the spectacle of communion, there was the spectacle of individual selfishness. What the Apostle desired was that all the Corinthian Christians, of all classes, should be together, and all on an equality. It was to be a social and a democratic meal.

Take next the name of Eucharist, and the idea conveyed by it, that of thanksgiving. This also was closely connected with the meal with which it originated. There, it is recorded, our Lord took bread and gave thanks (εὐχαριστήσας); and this giving of thanks communicated its spirit to the whole meal and gave it its name. The refreshment of the body aided that of the spirit, and the mind ranged over all the mercies of God, temporal and spiritual, which were centred in and consummated by the "unspeakable gift" of Christ. But the joy of a meal is not solely in the eating and drinking, but in its social character. The full idea of the eucharist is that of a company of men, redeemed in body and soul, blessing God together, and thanking Him in common for all his mercies, which they acknowledge as springing from the death and resurrection of their Lord.

Next, we have the idea and name of Sacrament, which is specially attached by custom to the Lord's Supper. It may be well to quote the words of Pliny, to which I have alluded in speaking of the sacramental idea generally. The Christians, he says, "bound themselves by a sacrament" (a military oath) "not to commit thefts, robbery, or adultery, not to break faith, or refuse to give up a deposit intrusted to them. Then, after separating for a time, they came together again and partook of food, of a common and innocent kind." We see in the scene thus described all the characteristics of a holy society: they meet at a meal, and with all the happy accompaniments of a meal; but they have previously bound themselves by a solemn pledge, which they take in common, that they will together observe the great principles of morality, which constitute the law of God.

In the Greek of the early Church the common name for the ordinance was the Synaxis, that is, the gathering together, which shows how prominent was the idea of social union. In the letters of Constantine it is called the Synod, the coming together. In the Latin it was similarly called the Collecta, which has the same meaning: and the word collect applied to certain prayers means the prayer which was used at this collecta or gathering.

In later times the ordinance came to be known as the Mass; and this name is associated in the minds of Protestants with many superstitious ideas which gathered round it in the Middle Ages. But there is good reason to believe that even in this name we have the social idea of the Lord's Supper before us. It seems most probable that the word comes from Missus, the Roman name for a course at a meal, the same name which we are familiar with when we speak of the officers' *mess*.

But the name of Communion, which came out most definitely at the Reformation, brings the social spirit of the sacrament most fully before us. We are joined first to one another as a society, then to Christ as the head of the society, then to the spirit and the enterprise for which the society exists. And the name, as used in the New Testament, suggests the imparting to others, that is, not merely the making of gifts to the poor, but the giving of all that is best in us, so far as is consistent with the maintenance of an individuality, to the work and cause of our Master.

Let me here advert to an idea which has become very prominent in theological writings of late years, that which dwells on the Lord's Supper as a continuation of the incarnation. As the Word of God was incarnate in the person of Christ, so he is incarnate in the body of believers who are fed by his mystical body and blood. I think we may accept this with much profit, if only we rise to its spiritual and universal meaning. We are not to confine the eating of the body and drinking the blood of the Lord to this one ordinance. They were explained by many of the old Church writers as meaning that, as our Lord's human body was nourished by the common food, the bread and wine, so we, in partaking of the common food, are partakers of the same elements which form the substance of his body. If this seems hardly adequate, we may nevertheless reach almost the same conclusion by following the Gospel of St. John. There our Lord uses the same words of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, but with no allusion to the Lord's Supper, which was not instituted till a year later.

No such allusion could have had any meaning to those whom he was addressing. He explains them clearly as relating to the faith which spiritually appropriates him. "Verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." "He that eateth *me*, even he shall live by me." And this appropriation of himself He makes the universal condition of moral life. "Verily I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." When you consider that these words were spoken by Him who was the Word of God, without whom nothing was made, by whom, as St. Paul says, all things consist, or rather in whom all things stand fast, it is impossible to confine them merely to the sacrament, unless we are to maintain that none but Christian communicants have any moral goodness, which would practically deny all morality and cut away the moral ground of Christianity itself. There is a well known declaration of the Church of England, which bids its ministers assure sick persons who are prevented from receiving the sacrament that in the exercise of faith they eat Christ's body and drink his blood profitably to their soul's health, though they do not receive the sacrament with their mouth; and this is but the echo of the ancient and well-known words: "Crede et manducasti." A believer is always feeding on the bread of life. We may believe that our Lord intended the sacramental feast to be the centre round which should be grouped the manifold processes which bring us into union with Him. But, whether with processes or without them, the living union with Him is the thing of main importance. To dwell in Him as He dwells in us, to be joined with Him, body and spirit, to feel the throb and impulse of his life working through and through our own, to realize, in words which, whether or not they are genuine parts of Scripture, express exactly the scriptural idea that "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," — this is what is meant by eating and drinking Him.

And this cannot be confined to the advantage which each of us individually may receive from the communion. The spirit of Christ is philanthropic and social, and, if He dwells in us, He fills us with social love and beneficence. He is the life of men, and the light of the world. And in the passage in which He speaks of eating and drinking Him, He says: "The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of *the world.*" The extension of the incarnation must therefore mean to us not exclusively the union of select souls with the historic Christ in the sacrament, but, by all the means we have at hand, or without means at all, the realizing and embodying of his spirit in the nobler life of mankind.

The same large, social spirit as being that of the Holy Communion will appear if we glance at the history of the ordinance.

It was first a family feast, as the Passover had been. We read in Acts ii. 46, that, while the common prayers were held in the Temple, the communion was in the family — "breaking bread at home;" and this appears to have continued, in some places at least, for two or three centuries. Clement of Alexandria says that on Sundays the sacrament was held in the church, but on other days in the separate houses, where it evidently was presided over by the head of the family. In many places the Church sprang out of the family, as at Philippi from the household of

Lydia; with which we may connect the expression, “The church which is in thy house.” As there were no church buildings for the first two centuries, there would be no marked distinction between the family feast and that which would unite a larger number. So at Corinth and at Troas (1 Cor. xi. and Acts xx.) we find assemblies for the Lord's Supper which probably drew together, at least on special occasions, all the believers in the place, accompanied, in the one case, by ordinary social intercourse, in the other, by a speech (if we may adapt a modern social phrase) from the guest of the evening. We may imagine that, on such occasions, besides ordinary social intercourse, much would be said about the questions which agitated the little society, such as those discussed by St. Paul in the first Epistle to the Corinthians; and that, at Troas, where St. Paul was known to be going on a perilous enterprise, he would address them much in the way in which he spoke at Miletus to the Ephesian elders. It would be unnatural also to think that they parted without prayer. But nothing is said of prayer. The impression is that of a solemn farewell meal.

In the document known as the Didachè, the date of which is probably very early in the second century, the sacrament is still simply a solemn meal. It is called the eucharist or thanksgiving, and in this is not distinguished from thanksgiving generally or from the meals of Christians. The prophets and apostles there spoken of, who were men raised above the rest, not by a special selection but by their spiritual capacity, preside; and they may order a feast for any special occasion. At such a feast they are to give any advice that may be in their minds as to "righteousness and the knowledge of the Lord;" but also, as may be inferred, as to the common affairs of life ("the mystery of this world") so far as they affect the Church. And in the feast itself the union of believers is the chief thing dwelt upon. The "grace" or "prayer of consecration" consists of a thanksgiving to God for the knowledge He has given through his servant Jesus, and asks that, as the grains of wheat which were before dispersed on the mountains have been gathered into this loaf, so it would please God to gather his Church out of all parts of the world, and to bring them into the fellowship of his kingdom.

We hardly realize, I think, how much this fellowship of the kingdom was aided and made real by these common meals in which the poor were specially considered: nor how great a part was played by the gifts which we now speak of as the offertory or collection. It would hardly be too much to say that the presentation of gifts and their consumption was in itself the communion. The word which we translate communion means also in Greek an imparting, and those two meanings seem to be blended in the expression "fellowship," as where it is said that the converts at Pentecost abode in the apostles' teaching and fellowship. They are certainly blended in the communion of the early centuries. Lists of the congregation were kept on diptychs or folded boards, and these were read out at the very centre of the ordinance. This proceeding formed so large a part of the business that in many of the old liturgies[1] we have prayers entitled "Before the Names" and "After the Names." The prayers, *post nomina*, ask in some cases that God will be pleased to bless those whose names have been rehearsed, and to convert their offerings into a divine sacrifice — a very significative phrase. The names of the departed were not struck off, and offerings were made in the name of those at rest (*pausantium*). As each name was read out, the bearer of it advanced and laid his gift on the Lord's table, usually in kind, till it was heaped high with loaves and flagons and offerings of all kinds: then a part of this mass of gifts was consumed in the church itself, and the rest was accounted for by the deacons or carried to the sick and poor members in their own homes.

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[1] See *Gallican Liturgies* (Forbes and Neale), esp. pp. 2, 54, and 104.

It was only in course of time that a portion was severed from the rest to be specially consecrated: and it would seem that this led to the formation of an inner circle of communicants. One of the church writers at the time when this took place urges that this should not be held to deprive the ordinary members of all part in the sacred feast, but that some small cakes at least should be distributed among them. And it is remarkable that this custom is still observed in many parts of France, where, though only the priest and a very small number of the people actually communicate, small cakes and rolls are passed round to the general congregation under the title of "*pain béni*," or blessed bread. But in the earlier days all alike was holy; the rich and poor had a common meal, and body and soul were refreshed together. It is easy to see how greatly this aided both the Christian sociality and the discipline of the community. It was a meal which gladdened all, and united them in a fellowship of thankfulness and beneficence. To be excluded from it was to be cut off at once from the society of friends with whom a man's life was bound up, from the substantial meal, and from the benefits of the constantly increasing funds of the society.

This social element of the sacrament was by degrees set aside. It was impossible to maintain it in the form I have just described. The gifts were exchanged for money: there were many other sources of relief for the poor: governments which became Christian undertook the work of discipline, and church penitentiaries gave place to law. The sacrament became more and more a service of prayer and praise. Then, being cut off from common life, its words and forms became denaturalized: superstition took the place left vacant by utility; till at last a kind of magical virtue alone remained as the benefit of the sacrament: the communion table became an altar, the chancels were enormously lengthened, and the common people treated more and more as a herd unworthy even to gaze on the sacred mysteries; and instead of a common feast of love there was a vicarious sacrifice conducted by the priest on behalf of the people.

From this degradation the sacrament was in part extricated at the Reformation. In England especially the homilies then published exhorted men to come and feed themselves, and to come all together: the exhortations in the public service laid stress on this element; and the ministers were forbidden to celebrate the eucharist unless a certain number were present: even in a parish of twenty people there was to be no communion unless four or at least three came to communicate with the minister: even in illness two at least must be with the sick person. But the tendency of late years, it is to be feared, has been backward rather than forward; and in some of our churches the social element of the communion has been almost suppressed.

Can it be restored? Can the ordinance become really a communion again? Can it be made influential in the general life of the Church, so as to aid in the great social uplifting which is the task before the Church of our day? It seems evident that if this cannot be done, we shall drift into a state of things in which it will have only a kind of formal or magical value to those who attend it, hardly touching the reason or the conscience, while by the great mass of the people it will be (I fear it must be said it has been) deserted, as having no bearing on the life of the community. It is, no doubt, impossible to restore such scenes as I have described as existing in the early Church. But much may be done, first, by giving a more social direction to the present mode of conducting our communion services; and secondly, by associating with the central act of communion the social acts of common life.

1. The communion is the assertion of the Church's unity, the gathering, as we have seen that it was called in early days. The effort should be made to realize this union. A few communions, carefully prepared for, and uniting the people together, are much

more wholesome than very frequent attendances of a few leisurely persons, usually women, at what is miscalled a celebration, (for this word implies a full company of assistants,) and is more like the meeting of a private coterie. In the Scotch country parishes many days are given to preparatory exercises: it is a disgrace not to hold a token and to attend; and the whole body comes together, realizing before God their union in faith and the aspiration towards holiness. It may be that there are reasons why such gatherings should not be the only opportunity of communion, but some effort should be made, at least on occasions, to renew the general gathering. And let those who live and work together make the sacrament a bond to sanctify their common life. If we have guilds or societies for special objects, let every member make it a duty to attend the corporate communion. Let families especially, as much as possible, make it a social bond, not coming one at one time, another at another, but parents and children, masters and servants, together, renewing the paschal family meal of both Jewish and Christian times. And for this purpose we must freely adapt our arrangements to the actual needs of men, not making fictitious rules like that of fasting communion, or forbidding its celebration in the evening when the working people can most readily come, but acting in the spirit of our Lord's great principle that the Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

2. We must enlarge the application of the communion. Our sacraments in Church should be the centre of an influence which vivifies and sanctifies our common life. "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." It was a secular author, Charles Dickens, who said that our meals should be social sacraments, and I think, if this were admitted, our grace at meal-times, instead of being a muttered formality, would partake of the eucharistic character. It would be not only a thanksgiving for what we eat and drink, but a realizing of the presence of our Lord, a help to incorporation into Him, a hallowing of our social intercourse, and of the whole life, of which our meals are the material centre. We should realize the motto which originated in Germany: "Christ is the Lord of this house, the guest of every meal, the unseen hearer of every conversation."

If this spirit can be made to pervade the life of our Christian worshipers, and they can be banded together, as they were meant to be by the Lord's Supper, the spirit of the sacrament would extend itself throughout society. The meetings which are held not only for religious societies but for all which makes up a noble Christian life, for purposes of art, knowledge, inventions, would gain a reality beyond that which they have when undertaken merely for convenience or for gain. If bread and wine can represent the divine life, why not color or crucibles, or engines or ships? Do they not all minister to a life such as God has ordained for us — such as Christ has redeemed? Do we not believe that in Christ as the Word they all were made, whether we think of the material or of the genius which is in them, and that Christ, as man enthroned, is Lord over their final destination? And in the general life of mankind, social and political, the sacramental analogy is close: for we know that we are meant to be all one brotherhood. In the great outburst of fraternity which accompanied the first French Revolution it was customary to see in the streets of Paris long tables erected, with abundant though simple food, at which all classes sat down together. It was a short-lived enthusiasm, and had no adequate moral basis. But that basis we can supply. The object of Christian Endeavorers is a society grounded on Christ's self-sacrificing love, and using all the products of the world for its divine purpose. To the banquet of that nobler life are called, not the strong and the wealthy alone, but the maim, the halt, and the blind, the outcasts of our humanity. Let the sacramental feasts of early Christianity furnish the type and the assurance of that fuller banquet which God, we trust, will yet provide through our efforts for the enjoyment and the strengthening of all his family.

IV

CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

In the past lectures I have shown the bearing of the system of Christian ordinances on social progress in reference to the system itself, to the Bible, and to the sacraments. I have to show the same to-day in reference to creeds and confessions of belief. In the older church systems the creeds form part of the services and are recited aloud by all the worshipers. In all or almost all bodies of Christians, some statement of belief exists which all are supposed to recognize, and to which an appeal is made whenever a question is raised as to the terms of union. At first the rudiments of a creed appear in the formulas used at baptism, to which the candidate was asked to consent as the condition of being received into the Christian body. No profession, indeed, seems to have been exacted originally, as at the day of Pentecost: the willingness to be baptized was sufficient. But as the system began to be more definite, it was natural that some such test should be required. They were such as we find in the story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts viii., "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," which, if not a part of the original document, is probably quite an early insertion. Probably the words of our Lord, which require that baptism should be in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were very early converted into a profession of faith on the part of the candidate, and this was the foundation of all the creeds. As time went on, and the simple confession of the three names came to be viewed in the light of fuller knowledge and reflection, it was natural that some amplification should take place; and when controversies arose in which the whole Church took part, and statements which were judged untrue were put forward in a dogmatic form, it could hardly be but that these should be met by formal dogmas on the other side, which were incorporated into the creed. It may, however, be observed that the Gnostic systems, which touched even more fundamental questions than those raised in the fourth century, gave birth to no creeds; and that Pelagianism was simply put aside at the Council of Ephesus with a few words of unreasoned condemnation; so that we cannot assume that the existence of heresy is a proper ground for imposing statements of belief upon the Church generally. At a later time, in the sixteenth century, the great upheaval of mind and liberation of human thought in the Reformation gave birth on the Protestant side to detailed expositions of doctrine, and on the Roman Catholic side to the creed of Pius IV. It would be as impossible to deal with all the confessions of faith of the sixteenth century as with the numerous creeds which were put forward on one side or the other in the fourth and fifth centuries. But in almost all cases the Reformation confessions refer to or incorporate the main doctrines of the earlier creeds which remained in common use up to the Reformation, while they add articles relating to the chief topics which emerged in the Reformation era itself. There, according to Harnack, the process was arrested; no more creeds, no more formulating of the principles of religion in dogmas, was possible. So far as this is true, it implies, not so much that the effort to know truth and to give it a precise form of expression was exhausted, but rather that men began to be conscious that the dogmatic mode of statement is inadequate, and that subjects of such supreme importance can only be worthily treated by being expressed with greater tenderness and in more general terms, as Aristotle said that all moral truth must be roughly bodied forth rather than reduced to definitions like those of mathematics.

But this confession, that it is undesirable to frame new dogmas and incorporate them into creeds, does not imply that men are prepared to dispense with the creeds and confessions of faith which remain in existence. Almost every religious body has its standards to which reference must be made. The habit of reciting creeds as a part of divine worship has been given up by many of the Protestant bodies; but they by no means give up all distinctive tenets: to do so would be almost to deny the reason for their existence. And there are good reasons which may be advanced for retaining them: for, first, though dogmatism is an evil, mere vagueness is an evil also, and social life seems to demand some expression of the bases on which it rests; and secondly, where creeds and formulas which carry some authority are abandoned, there is by no means sure to be an abandonment of the dogmatic spirit. Ideas, which may be vague as to their expression, may be powerful still as tendencies: and the very fact that they cannot be brought out as authoritative standards, with which men may compare their own ideas and those of other men, may render them all the more potent for narrowness and condemnation. We have seen lately in England, in the Free Church Catechism, an attempt to formulate the beliefs on which the various bodies who do not accept the national church system are agreed. It would certainly be to ignore facts if we were to think of systems of doctrine as non-existent. They are present in the minds both of them who accept and of those who reject them; and it is necessary for us to consider how to deal with them if we are feeling out the bearing of our church system on social life.

I propose, then, in this lecture to consider, first, their legitimate place and power, and secondly the dangers inherent in the use of them; and then to point out, somewhat in detail, the way in which the most prominent doctrines may, with the needful modifications and explanations, be made subservient to social progress.

I

What is the use of creeds? Why should any confession be made, whether at baptism or in the ordinary worship, or by ministers when they undertake their office, or by members when they join the church body? This question is the more pertinent the more the sectarian view of religion is put aside, and the more we recognize that Christianity is not an exotic system thrust in upon an uncongenial world, but simply human life restored to its true condition. It must be shown that the feelings which dictate the use of creeds are worthy and not fictitious.

First, there is a kind of necessity, which is felt by some more than others, but by all in some degree, to speak out what we strongly feel. It was said by Goethe that all that he had written was due to this impulse, that it was all a confession of his own inner feelings. With him it issued in the writing of poetry; but it has as many phases as there are means by which man communicates with his fellows. Many of us feel it to be of use, and indeed to be an irresistible impulse, even when we are alone, to speak aloud what we are thinking. In ancient times all reading was ἀνάγνωσις, a reading aloud, and all prayer was spoken prayer. Possibly the disuse of this has made both these actions more desultory. The organs of speech and of thought are so closely allied that there is some danger in their separation. One of the greatest philologists of our time, Professor Max Müller, whose loss my own University and all the world are now lamenting, declares them to be exactly equivalent. We think in words, and the word once formed within craves expression by the outward voice. If I feel gratitude to God, a deep sense of his fatherly love, especially when tested in experience, or am aspiring in a definite manner towards his image as seen in Christ, or am longing for fuller supplies of the Holy Spirit, I cannot be content with a secret feeling of all this: I want to say it out, and to say it loud.

Further, the social spirit, on which we are dwelling, seems to demand this of us. Why should I shut up my inner feelings from my brother, or he from me? May not reticence go too far, even where it is prompted by sincerity? Is there not some danger that the thought or the feeling may be atrophied by having no expression in the voice? If men disagree, or feel coldly towards one another, no doubt private confidences will be impossible, and public confessions will be checked by the fear of inconsistency or of mutual condemnation. But when we feel the mutual confidence and common aspiration of brothers there is a deep satisfaction and an accession of strength to our faith in imparting those things which have given joy to our own hearts, and in enjoying the thrill which their response gives us, in speaking it out together, with the strength and the delight of sympathy.

In common life we are largely dependent on the words which express to us the gist of the matter in hand. Men are feeling about in different directions under a half conscious sense of something which they think or want: and some orator or some publicist gives them what the French call "*Le mot de la situation*," which interprets to them their wants, and sums up many facts in one idea. Such words are apt to gain too large an empire over the mind, and they become poor and common by constant use. But they have their legitimate use, and it is our duty to use them and to guard them against misuse.

Moreover, the promises of the Gospel are not given only to secret belief, but to open confession. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess;" and "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth and believe with thine heart, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." No doubt, when the fear of hypocrisy or the mistrust of men seals our lips, we may find other modes of expressing ourselves, in signs, or actions, or other parts of the Christian life, which God will recognize, and man also. But the simple and natural means of expression is the living voice.

The creeds were known in Greek and Latin as the Symbols. They were the signs and watchwords by which Christ's soldiers recognized one another. The power of words, which has just now been touched upon, is greatly heightened when they are used by many in common. They draw forth mutual confidence ; they stimulate, they have a kind of physical action upon the nerves beyond their merely rational meaning; so that such words as Amen, Hallelujah, Abba, or Maranatha, though their original meaning may hardly be known, seem to have more power in Hebrew, as a vehicle for concentrated thought, than their equivalents in the languages in common use. Any one who has witnessed the worship of the Mahometan Dervishes, and has seen them stimulated to ecstasy by the repetition in many tones of the simple words, "La illah illah 'llah," "There is no God, but God," clasping each other's hands, swaying and bending before and behind till their long hair sweeps the ground, and raising their united voices till the dome above them seems to be filled with one undivided sound, knows, as he could hardly have conceived otherwise, the power of a few words thoroughly believed, and confessed with united energy. It is true that fanaticism is a large ingredient in such scenes, but it must be our business to substitute enthusiasm for fanaticism ; and when in a short summary of our faith a whole body of Christian believers confess the God in whom we trust, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the blending of hearts and voices together heightens our faith and raises us to enthusiasm, and sends us forth with hearts and convictions strengthened for the service of God. Where creeds are not used in worship, hymns often serve the same purpose. And we may widen out our thought so as to embrace not religious worship only, but all assemblies of men in which deep convictions express themselves in forms of words to which all give a hearty assent.

II

But we must point out the dangers to which such expressions of our faith are liable.

The first of these is that we may easily come to put words instead of conviction. This is the danger of all forms when often repeated, even those of prayer and of the sacraments. Even words which at first represent our convictions most fully tend to become important in themselves; and while we use them the conviction wanes away, and nothing is left but a hollow sound.

Then again, there is a phase of experience in which we are carried away by the common consent and enthusiasm of all around us, while conviction is weak and wavering; the feelings are strongly excited, but the resolution does not match it. Like Ananias and Sapphira, we partake, but in a spurious manner, of self-renunciation and self-abandonment, so as to promise more than we really intend, and profess what is not fully borne out by our lives. And this is especially the case where expressions which imply intense devotion or spirituality are put into the mouths of large bodies of men.

There is another kind of hypocrisy which may be produced by creeds and confessions, especially when they are long and minute. The statements evoke questionings, and men cannot fully answer them. But the confession is exacted, either as a condition of entrance into a religious society, or an admission to office, or simply in private society by persons to whom a man feels himself beholden, or whom he is unwilling to distress. Perhaps everything is made to turn on some minute and non-essential condition. A man in such a case, partly from fear, partly from sympathy, partly from modesty, and from a kind of shame at not joining in a confession which those beside him are making without question, tries to accommodate his conscience to propositions to which his assent is at best doubtful, and his sense of truth may suffer from the process.

There is another way in which these statements of doctrine may injure truth. They become party watchwords. Those who accept them appear to us to be the right sort of men, and those who do not are condemned. And so we put aside the true standard of judgment, that of the life, and judge men according as they can or cannot frame their lips to pronounce our shibboleth. This has led again and again in Christian history to a callousness of conscience which results first in untruth and then in cruelty.

But the most marked danger is that creeds and confessions rarely escape the evils which beset every phase of dogmatism.

As the Church expanded, it came in contact with the philosophy of Greece and the hard legal system of Rome, and discussions arose, such as those to which the restless Greek mind was accustomed. When we read the account given by St. Paul, in 1 Cor. xiv., of some scenes in the early Christian assemblies, we cannot help being reminded of some of the descriptions of the Greek schools of philosophy. It seems, indeed, to be of the nature of strong religious conviction to take delight in intellectual refinements, though experiences like that of Baxter in his old age tend to make men go back to simple principles. The revolution wrought in human thought by the advance of Christianity brought an unsettlement which it was difficult to allay. Men were in danger of being carried into extravagances such as those we read of in the epistles to the Colossians and to Timothy, which afterwards developed into the various forms of Gnosticism; or, later on, they fell into Neo-Platonism or Manichæism. We may think that it would have been better to have simply met speculation by argument, as St. Paul seems to have done, in the assurance that the power of the Christian life would gradually raise men to what St. Paul dwells on with so much delight in the Epistle to Timothy, 'the sound (sane, or wholesome) words of Christ himself, and the teaching which is according to godliness;' and indeed, as has been already remarked, the Gnostic controversies, though they went so deep, left no creeds behind them. But it cannot be a matter of wonder or of blame that, when speculations arose which seemed to bring into question the complete godhead of Christ, on whom the Church was calling upon the world to place an absolute reliance, men should have wished to have definite statements to set against those which were at times thrust upon their acceptance. It was said, indeed, by a great bishop and church historian of the last generation in England that the decision at Nicæa was the greatest calamity which ever befell the Church. But it is difficult to see how it could have been avoided. The Greek mind was subtle, clear, and confident, and was accustomed to pronounce upon abstract subjects. The word dogma meant first the opinion or *ipse dixit* of a philosophical leader, which his pupils accepted on his authority; and secondly, the decree or resolution of a popular assembly, such as the ruling councils at Athens, whose decisions began with the form: "It has seemed good to the council and the people" (Δέδοκται τῇ βουλῇ καὶ τῳ δήμῳ). Thence it passed into the common name for a philosophical doctrine. And as the Greeks were divided into numerous sects, each with a series of dogmas of its own, there was the fear lest the

Church in like manner should be torn into fragments. Indeed, the adherents of the various creeds which arose in the fourth and fifth centuries might well have been considered as the beginning of sects who were drifting away from one another. It may be that by patience and care this danger might have been avoided, without any distinct pronouncement of a universal dogma. Signs are not wanting that the danger of dogmatism was recognized by earnest men. An instructive story is told by the historian Socrates which bears upon this. "A short time," he says, "before the general assembling of the bishops at Nicæa, the disputants engaged in preparatory logical contests before the multitudes; and when many were attracted by the interest of their discourses, one of the laity, a confessor, who was a man of unsophisticated understanding, reproved these reasoners, telling them that Christ and his apostles did not teach us dialectics nor art nor vain subtleties, but simple-mindedness, which is preserved by faith and good works. As he said this, all present admired the speaker, and assented to the justice of his remarks; and the disputants themselves, after hearing his plain statement of the truth, exercised a greater degree of moderation. Thus, then, was the disturbance caused by these logical debates suppressed at this time."

It cannot be said, unhappily, that these dialectical subtleties were put aside, or that they left no mark upon the creeds. The Greek mind continued to refine upon Christian truth, until all reality had waned away. Even the last Greek emperor had a peculiar theory of his own on some minute point of our Lord's personality. And the common people seem to have been infected with this propensity. Gregory Nazianzen tells how in his time it was impossible to go into a shop in Constantinople without being asked to assent to some Arian proposition ; and, though the Arians were the aggressive side at that time, we may be sure that the orthodox were equally eager, with results of blended good and evil. It cannot be doubted, I think, that, when Mahometanism arose, one of the reasons of its rapid progress among the Christians of the East was its possession of a short monotheistic creed, which had a greater note of reality than these refinements.

Nevertheless, we may trace a certain grandeur and a noble reticence, not apart from the action of the spirit of God, in the creeds as they have come down to us. It is natural, no doubt, to contrast the simplicity of such words as those of our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount, and his naming God simply as the Father, with the philosophical expressions even of the Nicene Creed, "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one Substance with the Father." But to those who framed the creeds all such expressions were natural and real; and the transition just pointed out was but like the translation from one language to another, from that of the Aramaic peasant of Galilee to that of the intellectual Greek. Moreover, must we not account it a noble effort of the human mind — one indeed of the noblest — to endeavor to argue out its convictions and to give them a logical and systematic form? This must be admitted, only with two provisos: The one, that men should be aware that their logic and their words are no full measure of divine truth, so that, when they have said their best, they should acknowledge, like St. Paul, that, even in such a matter as the doctrine of justification, good men may be "otherwise minded," and "If any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know." The other is that they must acknowledge the right of coming generations to retranslate the truth out of Greek thought into that of the West and of modern times. "We can no more think in Greek," says Sabatier, "than we can talk in Greek;" and the great danger of all dogmatic systems is that they tend unduly to perpetuate themselves and to overlay the more genuine expression which might be given to the truth which they contain.

This is what happened in the Roman world. The Latin-speaking Fathers caught up the expressions of the East, and hardened them down into the forms of Roman positivism and Roman law. It is a curious fact, and one which has hardly received sufficient attention, that the knowledge of Greek had almost disappeared from the Western Empire at the end of the fourth century. Augustine, though much influenced by Plato's philosophy, yet could only read Greek imperfectly. His friend Rufinus, when he came to Rome in 398 after a long sojourn in Palestine, describes the manner in which he was beset by his Latin friends with petitions that he would translate the works of the great Greek Christian writers, which they had heard of but had not read. His friend, Paulinus of Nola, a poet and man of culture, admits that he entirely failed in an attempt which he made to write a Latin version of the Recognitions of St. Clement and begged Rufinus to undertake it. Rufinus complied with the requests of his friends, and it is to his labors that we are indebted for the power to read the περὶ ἀρχῶν of Origen, of which the original has disappeared. But the Latins, having so little knowledge of Greek, took the Greek philosophic terms and translated them into Latin as they could, — a process which often resulted in confusion. This is seen in the well-known instance of the word ὑποστάσις, which was rendered in Latin by Person, and οὐσία, which was rendered Substance, whereas it is the word ὑποστάσις which etymologically means substance. Jerome writes to Pope Damasus that he is tormented by his Greek neighbors who require that he should say "Three Hypostases or Substances," whereas he had always said, "Three Persons and one Substance." With this and similar inadequate renderings the theology of Greece passed over to the West, and eventually was systematized in the Quicumque Vult or Athanasian Creed, with its exactness of form rather than of thought, and its damnatory clauses which reflect the hardness of Roman law.

It has been attempted in the present day to contrast the theology of the East and the West, and especially that of Alexandria and of Carthage, as though the Greeks had all the merit and the Latins the demerit. But several things need to be said in modification of this. It must be remembered that Origen, the chief name of the Alexandrian school, was banned in his own city; and that it was Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, and Epiphanius of Cyprus, at least as much as the Bishop of Rome, who caused the memory of Origen to be condemned as that of a heretic; also, that though we may admit that the Eastern conception of the Divine immanence was truer than that dualistic conception which prevailed in the West and made God almost an intruder in his own world, yet the Eastern conception led to no great development of doctrine or practice after the age of the great Fathers; whereas the Western, by tormenting the human mind and making it realize sin and redemption, begat Anselm and Aquinas, St. Francis and St. Louis, Wycliffe, and Luther. If the East was truer to God, at least on the metaphysical side, the West was truer to humanity and its practical needs. Each conceived God as best it could. We must venerate Cyprian and Augustine as well as Clement and Origen and Athanasius; but we must not bind ourselves in any absolute way to either theology, but translate the great Christian truths into the terms of modern life and its social needs.

We shall have to deal later on with the chief doctrines of the three creeds which have come to us as almost universally held. The Roman or Apostolic Creed is the most perfect of those formed in the West out of the baptismal formula, and consists mainly in bare statements of fact. It was at first shorter and did not contain several of the articles such as "descended into hell," which afterwards gained so vast a development. These, according to Harnack, were added in Gaul in the fifth century, during which for a time it was superseded in Rome by the Nicene Creed, though it was afterwards re-adopted in its amplified form. It is remarkable that, when this creed was partially adopted in the East, the attempt was made to give it a controversial bearing in opposition to Gnosticism by the insertion of "truly" in the clauses relating to Christ. "He *truly* suffered, was *truly* buried." But this tendency to add ideas to the facts was set aside in the West, and the Roman Creed remains uncontroversial. It could hardly be used for the condemnation of Gnosticism, or Arianism, or Pelagianism, which afterwards gained such a wide importance. In the Nicene Creed, on the other hand, ideas are dominant. There also two clauses, the virgin birth and descent into hell, were originally absent, as was all after the word Holy Ghost. It reached its present condition in the Council of Chalcedon. The Athanasian Creed, or Quicumque Vult, deals with the ideas imported from the East as concrete realities, to be peremptorily enforced under the threat of punishment.

None of these creeds contain any definite moral ideas; they are creeds of belief, not of faith; and what our age craves is that faith should be living and practical. This was felt at the time of the Reformation, and, in the works of the Reformers, though hardly in their creeds, this element is supplied: it sprang from the heart. But partly the exigencies of ecclesiastical propriety, which made it seem necessary to restate the old creeds almost in their own words, and, even in the parts relating to justification, to quote Augustine rather than appeal to facts; partly a scholastic tendency, which was inbred in the Reformers, and developed itself soon after to extreme proportions, prevented the moral and social element from appearing. If we read such books as Luther's "Christian Liberty" or Tyndale's "Obedience of a Christian Man," we are on the solid ground of fact and moral need. We have there the real Reformation, such as Wycliffe had desired to see, such as Tauler and à Kempis less completely foresaw, such as Savonarola also strove for, — the uprising of the lay mind and lay occupations to claim for themselves a Christian destination and to cast off the graveclothes of clericalism. But the Augsburg confession and the utterances contemporary with it, even the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, have the old scholastic spirit strongly binding them. And in a few years this tendency increased. In England there was some turn towards the moral side in the Westminster Confession; but the Puritan movement was spoilt by the controversies about ritual and clerical government. In Germany the development was all in the scholastic direction. I may give an illustration of this from Dr. Pusey's first book, his vindication of German theology. I will ask your pardon for reading it in its original Latin and Greek; and if some who do not know these languages should say that it appears to them a mere froth of words, I may assure them that even with knowledge of the languages they would find it hard to make it anything else.

Pusey says (Theol. of Germany, Rivingtons, 1828, p. 37): "Not the obscurest or most abounding in metaphysical terminology is the 'Systema Theologiæ viginta novem definitionibus absolutum' of J. A. Scherzer, in which the definition concerning Christ occupies three quarto pages in a single period. It thus commences (pp. 172 sqq.): 'Christus est θεάνθρωπος, Deus scilicet, etiam Αὐτόθεος, et homo, Patri in cœlis et matri Virgini (ut Virgo reverâ θεοτόκος, et Christus etiam secundum humanitatem Filius Dei naturalis sit) (in terris ὁμοούσιος) constans in unione ad unam personam (propter quam unionem etiam secundum humanam naturam Filius Dei naturalis non adoptivus est) [ἀ] περὶχωρίστως, ἀσυγκύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαστάτως, ἀχωρίστως, factâ naturâ divinâ et humanâ impeccabili.' " This was in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Pusey shows that this extreme theological hairsplitting was not merely a speculation. The adherents of such a system denounced their opponents as heretics. Calov's "Systema locorum theologicorum" is, he says, concise in fourteen volumes quarto. "He decides that the Reformed (or Calvinists) are to be reckoned among the heretics who hold dangerous errors, and that they are no members of the Augsburg confession; and closes with a long censure of the various errors of Calixtus and his followers." Pusey also says that Calov refuted Grotius' commentary step by step very bitterly. And he shows how this scholasticism killed (1) Theological Ethics, (2) Exegesis, (3) Ecclesiastical History. Is it not evident that, when theologians are employed on refinements of this kind, all possibility of theology ministering to the general life, to moral and social well-being, is sacrificed? Men will not listen to that which appears to them merely a piece of black-letter knowledge, interesting to an esoteric class. And their lack of interest soon passes into alienation or contempt. There is more: it cannot but appear to men as a matter of uncertainty; for methods are pursued in theology which would not be applied to any other subject; there is an air about theology of being willful and disputatious, the very opposite to the spirit in which men of science or of business set to work. And, further, if these uncertainties are overcome by some authoritative statement, it is a statement which people find it very difficult to understand; and, like the customary law of ancient times described by Maine, it is the property of a particular class. You must go to the clergy for its interpretation; or, if you have gained some understanding of it, you become one of a peculiar class whose ideas and interests are not those of men living round you. This gives rise to conceit on the part of these within the charmed circle, and, in those without it, to envy or contempt. It was thus that at the time of the Reformation the story of the old priest who said Mumpsimus instead of Sumpsimus in his office, and refused to abandon his old Mumpsimus, was widely circulated and passed into a proverb; and that, as generally reported, the most solemn words of the Mass, "Hoc est corpus" were turned in derision to Hocus Pocus.

It was attempted, some years ago, by Canon Scott Holland in "Lux Mundi" to defend the vast growth of creeds by the fact of the general growth of the human mind. Simple words, it was argued, might suit a simple community; but as civilization grew, and the Church appropriated to itself larger and larger spheres, a more complex creed was to be expected. This argument will not hold. If it were true, we should have to draw out the creed to enormous dimensions. Some thirteen centuries have passed since the longest creed, the Athanasian, was formed: not only would the argument require that this creed should be trebled because of the lapse of time, but, when we consider the great complexity of modern life, and the wider outlook which we have gained in the last four centuries, it would have to be increased ten times. But there is nothing which an age like ours craves more than simplicity. Men are wearied and worn with the multifariousness of occupations, and would wish to find in religion, not a corresponding complexity, but a simple clue to guide them through the labyrinth. That clue will be found in the character of Christ our Lord, in the righteousness and truth and love which are embodied in Him. I propose, then, in the remainder of this lecture, to point out how this central principle will affect our use of creeds and articles and fit them for the work of furthering and sanctifying the common and social life.

III

It was a true observation which George Eliot put into the mouth of Adam Bede, that all doctrines were but expressions of life "like finding names for your feelings." The central point of all religion is righteousness; which is, towards God, faith or filial trust, and, towards men, social justice and love. The task before us is to unroll what has thus been rolled up, and to show Christian doctrine as the expression of righteousness and social service. First, let us take the chief articles of the older creeds. The Apostles' Creed is, it is said, so well adapted as a point of union because it deals merely with facts. So far as this is true, it is, no doubt, of use to us, because it presents to us solid facts like the death of our Lord, from which we may always start afresh, when speculation has failed us. But facts by themselves can never be matters for faith: all depends on the meaning which they have to you, the sentiments which they excite in you. That Christ died was acknowledged by Tacitus, but meant only that a man of that name, whom he probably thought of as a turbulent person, had been put to death in the procuratorship of Pilate. Faith is quite a different thing from this: for it has always in it the moral elements of trust, of sympathy, and of aspiration.

I believe in God the Father. But the name of Father, though it means much — I may almost say all — to a believer, may be merely a name for the author of being. Homer's Jupiter is *πάτηρ ἄνδρων τε θεῶν τε.* But you can hardly say that he was a moral being at all. It is, unfortunately, into this channel of power and procreation that the creeds lead us. The Father is interpreted to mean a Maker, which, extend it as far as we will, to things visible and invisible, represents to us something non-moral, at least not necessarily moral. It is true that the confession of one God directs us in the right way: it saves us from polytheism, which is necessarily immoral. But we have gone a very little way in the right road by its mere confession. John Stuart Mill confessed a unity in Nature, but Nature was almost a demon to him; and God, he says, must either be not very powerful or not very good. And the mere confession of God as an Almighty Creator leads us, and has led the interpreters of the creeds, into speculations on the origin of matter and what is meant by creation, which have sometimes been a hindrance rather than a help to faith. "We may say," said the late Professor Jowett, "that God is infinite, incorporeal, and the like; but to say all this of Him is not half so much as to say He is just and loving and true." It is as the righteous and living God that He is presented to us in the Bible. If this cannot be expressed in our creed, and I know no reason why it should not, — it is confessed in noble terms in the Westminster Confession, — we must determine that in the teaching and interpretation of the creed this should stand preëminent, and that the idea attached to the name of God and Father should be that of truth and love and righteousness. "The righteous Lord loveth righteousness. His countenance shall behold the thing that is good."

That this righteousness is revealed in Christ is the very essence of Christianity: and this should be to us, as it is to the New Testament, the meaning of the words "I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God;" that is, not the metaphysical but the moral relation is supreme. When St. Peter made his confession, its value was not that he was impressed by such ideas as are conveyed to our minds when we say, however rightly, that He is "God of God, light of light, begotten not made;" but that he recognized a moral supremacy in that peasant's form which stood before him, whose thoughts he had imbibed, whose influence had mastered him, and who had now given a more difficult turn to his teaching by the constant prediction of his death. To own Christ meant to own that the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, of the parables of human life, the character of the teacher, the faith which made Him One with the Father and consecrated Him to the good of mankind in life and in death, was the true manifestation of the Deity among men. This must be our confession also, and on this all will depend; the character of holiness stamped upon Him from before his birth, "that Holy thing which shall be born of thee;" the undefiled purity of his nativity, whether or not men feel that they can assert the actual and physical virginity as a doctrine; the suffering and death, not as a mere fact, but as coloring and sublimating the idea of righteousness, and as being the great self-offering which draws all men to Him by its moral power, as interpreted by such words as those of St. Paul, "He died for all, that they which live should henceforth not live unto themselves, but unto Him who died for them and rose again." Then his resurrection, however it may be conceived of as a physical fact, is the pledge that righteousness is immortal, and the beginning of the process, carried on by the Ascension and the Session at the right hand of God, which assure us that the righteous and loving One, whom we have recognized as Divine, is supreme in the universe, and that this is the standard by which quick and dead will be judged. Some means, I repeat, must be found by which this may be brought into the clear light, if we are not to go on repeating words which have a merely mystic force, and have no power over the conscience. We must ourselves acknowledge to one another, and proclaim to the world, that it is the moral fact that we hold on high, on which depends our salvation and that of the world.

The later articles of the creeds, no doubt, have more of a moral and spiritual ring. The Spirit and the Church are holy; and the gathering of the members of the Church is that of saints. We have, however, still to beware of the non-moral intruding itself. Sainthood is consecration, and consecration may be only a dedication to some great Power which may not be the true Lord. There were saints of Molech and of Ashtoreth; and even in Christian times the standard of saintliness has varied greatly, being at times almost identified with asceticism, and at others with a separate, unearthly, forbidding, and exclusive experience, very different from that of Him who came eating and drinking, sharing in the common life of humanity that He might draw men to the true God. This also must be made to appear when we confess the character of the church and its members as holy, and express the belief that this life of holiness will be everlasting. I need not dwell upon the Nicene Creed, which so far as it is a record of facts is mainly the same as the Apostles' Creed; and so far as it partakes of Greek philosophy has been already touched upon. I will only say that here above all we need the power to translate the metaphysical into the moral. The central assertion, the ὁμοούσιον, must be shown as implying unity with the righteousness and love of the Father, — a righteousness and love which are the spring and the object of all the creation.

I will not linger upon the Athanasian Creed, except to point out that there, more than anywhere, this moralizing and spiritualizing of the terms used is required. There is no doubt that it expresses, though in language uncongenial to our day, and calculated to give men a false impression of the Gospel, which should tend always to simplicity, a very vivid faith. If we hold fast the moral clue in the interpretation of the divinity of Christ, we shall recognize, even in phrases which seem over bold or over refining, the desire to confess that He is truly the representative of the divine righteousness, and that this righteousness is not a mere philosophical idea, but has actually been lived out among men. And the same clue should guide us in all that is said of the Trinity. To believe that the righteousness shown forth in Christ is supreme amongst men; to believe that the Father is righteous in his over-ruling providence, and that this has been interpreted to us by Christ; and that the voice of conscience, by which the Spirit speaks, is also divine and one with those other two voices, is to confess the Trinity in Unity, and to give it a moral significance which will serve for social progress.

Let us pass now to the systems of doctrine elaborated at the Reformation, and show how a moral sense may be thrown into them which will give them power for social regeneration.

The two principal types of reformed doctrine are those represented by the Lutheran Confession of Augsburg and by the Helvetic Confession which is Calvinistic; the one circles round the idea of justification by faith, the other round that of God's sovereignty.

Each of these has been the subject of logomachy and of extravagances; yet the moral bearing of each is apparent on reflection.

Justification by faith may be tortured into the assertion that God cares nothing for the moral and spiritual state of a man, but merely demands that he should believe correctly certain propositions. When this has been the case, the doctrine can only be shown to have any moral bearing by means of fine-drawn explanations, and it loses all value for practical and social good. But no one ever said, "We are saved by belief." The saving faith is trust, which is a moral act or state of the soul. It is the very essence of a sound moral state in contrast to formalism, ceremonialism, or moralism. It implies not merely recognition of God and Christ as the supreme good, but sympathy with and aspiration towards the image of holiness which Christ presents. "He that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as He is pure." Justification by faith then implies that God looks upon us not according to the feebleness of our performances, but according to the ideal to which we are aspiring. The publican, saying "God be merciful to me a sinner," was justified not because of anything that he had done or of any profession which he had made, but because he knew his faults and aspired to better things. It is true that this may be expressed in a great variety of ways; but this is the essence of them all, and the clue by which they are to be explained. We must hold fast this also, that St. Paul in his statements of justification is not thinking of individuals only, but of societies. "That the blessing of Abraham, he says (namely, in thee shall all nations be blessed) might come upon the Gentiles by faith, that they might be justified by faith;" that is, that the longing after good which was to be found in them all, "seeking the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him," might be acknowledged, and so their life, degraded as it was, might find its place in the Church of Christ, by a recognition of the true object which they had blindly been seeking after. This surely constitutes the doctrine not merely a moral one, but a source of social inspiration.

The other doctrine, that of the sovereignty of God, with its issue in predestination or election, was partly negative, partly positive. It meant that neither doctrine nor practice could be a matter of will or caprice, but that men must accept the will of God, which is truth. It stood in contrast to the vast apparatus of ceremonies in the clerical system of the Middle Ages, which had denaturalized both life and religion, and to the trivialities of some of the scholastic speculations. All these partook of willfulness; henceforth we must be governed by the declared will of God. That this will was conceived of in too narrow a way is true, and also that the idea of what was God's will must be gathered from Scripture alone, — an idea which Hooker dispelled in his controversy with the Puritans. But the great affirmation, "Let God in all things be supreme," was surely a great and abiding moral principle, which serves in the present and in every age to make religion and life divine, and to free it from the technicalities and disputes which our church systems often present.

The positive part of the reformed or Calvinistic system is the assertion of election, which also has been perverted, and needs to be moralized. We are elected, but for what? To be conformed to the image of Christ; but this is an election, not to privilege or happiness, but to service and to suffering for the sake of others. It does not necessarily exclude any, but affirms that there are souls to whom the preëminence in doing spiritual good is accorded, so that through them the rest may be benefited. The consciousness of this call, and the assurance that it shall not be frustrated, has made the Calvinistic belief, notwithstanding its aberrations, the parent of strong men; and it is in entire conformity with the course of human society; for neither in goodness, nor in the arts, nor in political and social life, are we all on an equality; and it is of the utmost importance that we should recognize those to whom special endowments have been given, and that they, too, should recognize their calling as coming from God, if only they will add this, that it is given them for the good of mankind.

At the time of the Reformation the doctrines of the Church of Rome were formulated in the Council of Trent; and truthful men, looking on a great time of controversy, will not despise contributions to truth even from the side to which they are least inclined. I think there are three main doctrines which have made the Church of Rome maintain its power over the Christian conscience, and which it is important to show forth in their moral and social bearing. The first of these is Catholic unity, which is embodied in the papacy. The papacy is a continual protest against willful division, and a continual assertion that there is a truth in which we must all be at one. It is, unfortunately, the method of the Roman Church to give to truth too formal and material an expression; and the mere submission to the Holy See can never bring about the true unity. But so great is men's need of unity that this one thing has caused many of the deepest minds of this century, educated in the midst of Protestant light, to join the Church of Rome. *Securus judicat orbis terrarum.* And I think we may be sure that this process will continue until Protestants learn to ground all their common faith on the central idea of Christian righteousness. Starting from that, they will be at one; and their unity will not be the less imposing because it is grounded on life, and goes forth in social endeavor, although their modes of worship and forms of doctrine may be different. Unity, and unity which can be seen and recognized, is an imperative demand.

Next comes the idea of Transubstantiation, which is really a scholastic hardening down of a spiritual idea. The ἰδέα of Plato was a mental thing, and has rightly passed into our word "idea." With Aristotle it was exchanged for οὐσία, which the schoolmen made into "substance." But substance, separated from all accidents, is a spiritual, not a material thing. When, then, it is said that the eucharistic substance is transformed, while the accidents which can be seen or tasted remain, this is really the assertion that to us, in our minds and feelings, the change has come about. The elements have become in their *idea* or spiritual essence no longer bread and wine, but the flesh and blood of the Lord. And, further, the sense of an actual presence, which leads to adoration, and which touches a chord in thousands of simple hearts, who feel that they have been in the very presence of God, though they may not have understood a word of the Latin service, is one which our Protestant churches have yet to supply; it is a great and living force.

Thirdly, the doctrine of purgatory has been a protest in favor of something more tender and discriminating than the assertion which has dominated so much of Protestant theology, that from the day of death there can be no change in those who admittedly come short of fitness for heaven. Newman, while still a Protestant, used to declare that what was protested against in the article of the Church of England was not purgatory itself, but only the Roman doctrine about it. The name purgatory will probably never be admitted into Protestant theology; it is haunted by the idea of masses for the dead, and the immoral notion of indulgences, which Luther slew by the saying that it was sin, not pain, which we want to get rid of. But it cannot but be felt that social morality is far better supported by taking the mass of men in the imperfect stages of faith and conduct, and training them for better things, and by believing that this process will go on beyond the grave, than by the belief that only those who have gone through a precise and recognizable change in this world are to be counted as God's children, and that all hope of improvement is closed in the hour of death.

In the churches of the present day, though there are no new forms of dogmatic belief, there are certain doctrines which powerfully sway men's minds, to which a moral meaning needs to be given. These are inspiration, the atonement, and eschatology. Let me say a few words, in conclusion, on each of these.

The thoughts of Christians in this century have tended to deny to the Bible the verbal or plenary inspiration which used to be claimed for it, to think of the men rather than the books as inspired, and to trace in the Bible not so much faultless expressions of truth as the history of the growth of a divine society. At the same time another conviction has come to us, — that the spirit of God works very widely among men; that other religions besides that of the Bible are not wholly destitute of His power; and that God has been training men generally in their various social systems, though the full type of an inspired society is to be found in the Bible alone. How far will this lead us? It cannot stop short of the belief that, wherever truth and goodness are to be found, there is the work of the spirit of God. We must cease to appeal to the Bible contrary to the dictates of advancing knowledge or of common sense; we must take its utterances in connection with the age in which they were written, and each part in connection with the whole. No part is without its inspiration when viewed in connection with Christ himself. The life of Christ and his teachings, which are its centre, will always be supreme over the human conscience; but we shall also recognize God's word and its divine authority in all that is true and good, whether in literature, or in science, or in social movements.

The atonement is that side of the incarnation which has to do with sin. But we are coming to view it less in its relation to punishment, more in its relation to holiness. The reconciliation is primarily the bringing of man back into union with God in thought, feeling, and action; but this can only be effected, as experience shows us, through a process of suffering and of death. The cross draws all men to God; and each, as he is drawn, is crucified with Christ. This, I think, most truly represents the Biblical idea. Yet it must be confessed that in most ages men's minds have been haunted with the idea of a penalty which has to be removed, or at least of a forgiveness which has to be obtained by sacrifice. We cannot allow the notion that God needs to be propitiated by a bloody victim who undergoes the punishment instead of those to whom it was due. But we can admit that the Father's heart needs the satisfaction of the acknowledgment of sin and its just consequences. The teaching of Macleod Campbell, which he found shadowed forth but dismissed by Jonathan Edwards, that in Christ as the typical man, in whom humanity is built up, both God and man behold a repentant world, is surely a worthy satisfaction of the demand of the human conscience; and if we add that the power of the cross to draw all men was known from the first to God, we may well admit that the cross was a necessity, and that it was a true satisfaction to the Father for the sins of the whole world. As a social power, it must always be the source of that self-sacrifice without which no society can hold together, and no great work of social regeneration can be carried on. I may direct attention of those who would wish to follow out this thought to some remarkable articles which have lately appeared in the "Contemporary Review," on "The crucifixion as an evolutionary force."

Lastly, the teaching of eschatology has

undergone a considerable change. The idea that Christ will personally reappear in this world, that there will be a judgment in which each man's lot will be irrevocably fixed, and that then a final severance will take place between two classes, the utterly wicked and the absolutely good, is felt to be unreal. It is also not justified by Scripture. For scriptural expressions are ideal: "the good," "the wicked," "the froward," "the liberal," "the just," are typical persons. No such people ever actually lived, though many, no doubt, are very wicked, and on the other hand many, we trust, partake of Christ's righteousness by the aspiration which is described by St. Paul, "I count not myself to have apprehended, but I press towards the mark." Moreover, the idea of our Lord's coming again in this manner is untrue. In the passage from which it is derived, our Lord's words before the high priest, he did not say, as the Old Version has it: "Hereafter shall ye behold the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven," but, as in the Revised Version, "From this time forward ye shall see Him." The cloud was the emblem of divine power, and the meaning of the ascension when the cloud received Him was that He was taken up into the divine presence and clothed with its power. The high priests saw Him coming even as He stood before them. On the day of Pentecost they saw Him coming more fully, and within forty years He had come to destroy their rebellious city, and to bring in his kingdom. That has been going on ever since, and we must pray for it, and be amongst them who "love his appearing." Wherever He appears, there is a division made between those who love and cleave to Him, and those who do not. The judgment is going on, though its consummation may be yet to come. The presence of the kingdom of God among men, and the hope of the reign of Christ, is infinitely important. And instead of saying to men, Come within the little coterie of those esteemed to be faithful, and with them prepare for another world, we need not scruple to say, Come and ally yourself with the triumphant company of those who follow Christ, and by whose efforts He is coming more and more throughout the history of the world; recognize Him everywhere; think of no one as positively evil; make the most of each man; for all may contribute something to the great society of the New Jerusalem.

V

COMMON PRAYER AND PREACHING

I AM to discuss to-day the bearing of our church assemblies for public prayer and for preaching upon the work of social progress.

I begin by recalling what has been said before, but what appears to me to need saying again and again, that this function of common prayer and of preaching is not the sole nor the main work of the Christian Church. Our Lord, I have pointed out, though He sanctioned the custom by his presence in the synagogues, and though He used the synagogues for preaching, yet said no single word intended definitely to enjoin the practice on his disciples. Probably He realized that the synagogue worship must pass away, and that any word of his might hinder the process which was inevitable; and also that there was a tendency in human nature to lay too much stress on the public functions of religion, to the prejudice of the worship in spirit and in truth.

At any rate, the fact remains that our Lord said nothing about it. He gave the sacraments, which, as we have seen, were ordinances of life rather than of worship, but He said no more. And we may certainly conclude from this, first, that public worship and preaching were never meant to be as they have often been considered, the centre of the Church's life — righteousness of life, in the most extended view, is the destination of the Church; secondly, that to make ordinances, instead of righteousness, the condition of membership is to reverse the balance of our Saviour's teaching; thirdly, that Christians are left perfectly free to decide for themselves the mode of public worship and preaching, only looking for guidance to the spirit and providence of God; and fourthly, that the regulation of public worship and preaching should be determined by this question: how does it bear on the moral condition of great societies of men? that is, how does it contribute to social progress?

The Church sprang out of the synagogue; but, as I have shown above, the synagogues were not institutions for worship and preaching only. They attempted to realize, as far as circumstances would permit, a complete life according to the Jewish law, and to exercise discipline over their members. They were each of them local committees, ruling over fractions of the nation, the supreme power being the Sanhedrin : each synagogue was a local Sanhedrin ; worship and life were not dissociated. I have shown further that when the Christian ecclesia was formed, it undertook at once the whole life of its members, not their public and ceremonial worship alone. The Christians abode in the fellowship of the apostles, which implied contributing freely to the general well-being of the community, as well as in the teaching, the breaking of bread, and the prayers. And when the prayers came into prominence, we cannot doubt that they were conducted so as to bear upon the general interests of the society.

The prayers in which the first Christian Church continued were, no doubt, those which had been customarily offered in the temple and in the synagogues, and it is interesting to think that in some of the liturgies which remain in use, as in that of the Anglican Church, we very probably have at least some fragments of the ancient forms of Israelite devotion. But if so, we must conclude that they reflected the principles of the community of Israel, in which the social and national idea was always prominent, not a separate or individual devotion. We may take the 122d Psalm as giving us a view of the way in which the pious Israelite conceived of religion and of the services of the temple. He seems to have had little thought of the ceremonial or the sacrifices, which would probably be taken for granted, but to have had the keenest appreciation of the connection of religion with the social and national life. The temple, no doubt, is the starting point. "I was glad when they said unto me, We will go into the house of the Lord." But the temple was the centre of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem was the centre of the Holy Land, "whither the tribes go up, even the tribes of the Lord, to testify unto Israel, and to give thanks unto the name of the Lord." It was the centre of the administration of justice, which was always a divine work. "There are the thrones of judgment, the seats of the House of David." And it was the centre also of social life, where those who came from all parts of the country met their friends again. "For my brethren and companions' sakes I will now say, Peace be within thee; because of the house of the Lord my God I will seek thy good." This was the spirit which must have been reflected in the devotions of the temple; and we have no reason to doubt that the same spirit passed into the common prayer of the early Christians.

When the Church was enlarged by the influx of the Gentiles, the reverence for Jewish usages remained, insomuch that for a long time there was a tendency to go back even to the ceremonial law; and St. Paul, in his Epistles to Gentile churches like the Galatians, presumes that his converts were "those that knew the law." But so far as Gentile associations were brought in, they would certainly tend to strengthen this social view of religion. All through the Greek and Roman world religion was closely connected with the social and national life. Think of the Pan-Athenaic festival, when the whole people went forth, magistrates and priests together heading the procession, to present the sacred garment (πέπλος) to the guardian of their city; or think of the Roman idea of religion, when the priestly offices were looked upon as the highest functions of public men. We may say, perhaps, that these were heathen practices; but it is better to say that they were natural; and Christianity does not seek to destroy what is natural, but to infuse into it the spirit of Christ. Accordingly, when directions for prayer are given by St. Paul to Timothy, who was to regulate the church at Ephesus, the first place is held by the public powers. "I exhort that first of all, intercessions, prayers, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and all who are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." I do not think that this can be taken merely to mean that prayer should be made that the emperor and his deputies should forbear to persecute. The prayer is for the authorities as the leaders and protectors of the human life which was to be conducted in peace and honesty. St. Paul had good reason, from his own experience, to know how truly the imperial powers could be the ministers of God's justice, when the Jewish authorities, who professed to act under divine sanctions, were the ministers of injustice. No doubt, in some parts of the

New Testament, as Professor Ramsay in his interesting studies of it has shown, the Roman power, which had begun to persecute, is looked on as an instrument of evil. This is the case with the Revelation, where, however, the Beast is Nero, and the Scarlet Woman is Rome in its degradation under such emperors as Nero was. But the imperial power was often beneficial in the provinces when it was cruel or corrupt at Rome ; and, as Professor Ramsay has also shown, where there was no special persecution, the natural feeling of sympathy with all social institutions as moral, and so ultimately religious, is resumed. Bishop Colenso maintained, and not without some good reasons, that the Epistle to the Romans was written to "all who were in Rome" without exception, all being regarded as being, in promise and in potency, subjects of Christ's redemptive power. Bishop Barry, in his Introduction to the Epistles of the Captivity, contends, in an argument the force of which we can hardly fail to admit, that the vast universal empire of Rome, at the centre of which St. Paul was now placed after much longing to be there, suggested to him the idea of the Universal Church, which to Baur and his school has been such a stumbling-block. And if Professor Ramsay is right in saying that St. Paul from the first had a fixed intention of making Christianity the religion of the Roman empire, we may well believe that he meant his converts to pray for the whole state of mankind as included in the empire. His efforts began with the family, the relations of which could be at once established on a Christian footing; and when we read his exhortations to husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, we have before us the beginnings of a new social state: for out of these spring all the other social relations: the community of man is but the extension of the family. St. Peter, writing probably somewhat later, and to provincials, adds to his exhortations for the Christian conduct of the family an exhortation to care for the whole humanity with its rulers. "Honor all men, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king." These words have a splendid ring of universality in them, and show the Church reaching out its arms to embrace society in its widest range.

We have few accounts of public worship in the New Testament, but those which we have give us the impression of a society bringing all its interests before God. Their public assemblies were scenes of discipline, of charitable relief, and of the communion feasts, as well as worship, as we may see from the early chapters of the Acts, where the apostles are represented as enthroned and receiving the offerings of the faithful, and the daily ministrations are those of gifts to the needy; or in the Corinthians, where St. Paul speaks of the gathering together in the name of Christ as the scene in which the incestuous man should be condemned or restored; or in 1st Timothy, where he says, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." If then we try to represent to ourselves such a scene as that in 1st Corinthians xiv., where "every one had a tongue, a psalm, an interpretation, or a doctrine," we can hardly doubt that these questions relating to the whole life of the believers would come prominently forward; or if we think of the scene at Troas, where St. Paul continued his discourses until midnight, and afterwards talked with them over the remains of the supper till near the break of day, we can hardly be wrong in supposing that such subjects as those treated of in 1st Corinthians would be discussed, namely, purity of life, litigation, the relation of Christians to their heathen neighbors, and the question of partaking with them of meats offered to idols; or mixed marriages and marriage generally, as well as the exercise of the various gifts, or questions like that of the resurrection, or the conduct of the Christian assemblies. We need not suppose that these were the subjects of a single discourse by St. Paul alone; but rather, as the expression "talked with them" implies, that any who had thoughts on their minds in reference to any of the topics discussed would express them in question, or argument, or prayer, or exhortation.

This also we may see clearly, that in those early days there was no official class who conducted regular services, but each man or woman to whom anything had been revealed freely expressed it. And this would prevent the narrowing down of the prayers, and their becoming conventional. The real needs of human life would be expressed with freedom from many sides.

No doubt, when the empire became Christian and the Church was greatly enlarged, an alteration in these respects came quite naturally. It was necessary that there should be a special class of officers to preside over the assemblies; and many of the more secular things which had previously been transacted in those assemblies would be transferred to public bodies. It is very unlikely that St. Paul, could he have lived to the days of Theodosius, when Christianity became part of the law of the empire, would have wished that disputes about property should be settled in the same assemblies as those for worship. And the relief of the poor would no longer be specially undertaken there, when the imperial power made so much provision for it. These things were done by Christian rulers. They did not cease to be Christian functions; they were administered by those who, as shown by their code of laws, considered the Christian view of life as supreme. But in the assemblies for prayer these functions were fully recognized; and the prayer has stood in all the liturgies, "Domine Salvum fac Regem" or "Rem Publicam," and "O Lord, save thy people," which brings the whole public life into the purview of our petition. When Charlemagne was crowned at Rome on Christmas Day, A. D. 800, he was ordained a deacon, and took part in the administration of the holy communion, as a token both that his imperial function was a function of the Christian Church and that there was no absolute distinction recognized between the minister of public prayer and the minister of public righteousness. They were to act, not merely side by side, but together. This view of matters has never been wholly abandoned in any Christian nation. I will touch upon it directly as it concerns my own country. But even in America, where the intervention of the national power in the affairs of religious communities is forbidden, yet the Congress is opened with prayer, and the President, as also the governors of states, issues his proclamation calling for days of national thanksgiving. It is felt that the solemn ordinances of national life are divine dispensations, and that their ministers must in their degree and position be ministers of God. In Paris the law courts are opened each autumn by a Mass of the Holy Ghost, at which all the judges assist; and in England of late years a solemn service at Westminster Abbey has been initiated for the same occasion, so that the administration of the law may be recognized as needing the inspiration of Heaven.

This, I doubt not, is recognized generally in the prayers of Christian congregations; but perhaps hardly sufficient extension has been given to the principle, and the mention of sovereigns or magistrates or of public officers generally has come to have something of a formal ring. May it not be that we are too individualistic? and may it not be that the assertion of the mutual independence of the worship of God and the management of state affairs, which to many sections of Christians seems so important, needs to be supplemented by the consciousness that all human life belongs to God and should be present before Him in our prayers?

In England, at the time of the Reformation, when the prayers still used in our churches, and mainly also in the Episcopal Church in America, were composed, it was felt that the power of the clergy with the Pope at their head had been excessive and tyrannous. I venture to refer to this at some length because these prayers form the only liturgy in the English tongue which is well known, and because they form the starting-point for most other systems of devotion in our language, some adhering to them, some revolting from them. The Reformation was a great uprising of the lay power. It was not merely the transference of certain powers which had been exercised by the Pope to the king as representing the nation, but the assertion of the lay power in all its branches as a divine function in opposition to the exclusive divinity before supposed to have been inherent in the priestly and ministerial office. The nation felt that it had been misguided; William Tyndale, whose services as an expounder of this portion of Christian truth almost equal his services as a translator of the Bible, says that the people had learnt to despise the common work of their professions, which was the true service of God, because they had been taught that the only service of God consisted in building chantries and putting up images, and keeping saints' days, and such other things, which he calls derisively "Pope-holy works." Now the balance was to be redressed. He says also, addressing the clergy: Are you only holy and spiritual? Nay, but, if a man be following the calling in which God has placed him in the spirit of Christ, he too is spiritual and also holy. And he applies this specially to the work of government: "The king's law is God's law, being nothing but the law of nature which God has written in the heart of man." These sayings, being those of the writer at once of the greatest insight and of the most popular fibre of any of our Reformers, no doubt express the belief of the nation. Accordingly in all the chief offices of the Prayer Book this is acknowledged. It is a misuse of words to call this Erastianism, for Erastus never wrote a word till long after the Prayer Book was composed; but it is the great doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, which has been asserted by all the Protestant churches, but ignored by them all in practice, — the doctrine that the lay life, the life of government, of the professions, the life of the merchant or the literary man, the common life of the people, is as much a divine life, a scene of the working of the Holy Spirit, as that of the minister or worshipers in the church building; that each is spiritual, each a church function. Till this is not merely acknowledged but acted on, we do not come up to the standard of the New Testament, and our so-called churches are but half churches, devoid of at least one essential element of vitality.

The Book of Common Prayer was a protest against this. It prays over and over again for the rulers and the people, side by side with the ministers of religion, as forming the complete church. It maintains the great principle that the object of the Church's existence is not the limited one of conducting public prayer and preaching, with some adjuncts of benevolence, but the whole Christianized life in its widest range. I select two passages which bring this out very vividly. 1. At the communion service, when the commandments have been read, the prayer is not for the individual, that he may meditate in them and spiritualize them, — a great matter which is acknowledged in the words "incline our hearts to keep the law" — but for the whole community or Church, that the ruler of this Christian commonwealth, realizing that he has a ministry of God, may in that ministry of righteousness seek God's honor and glory; and that his subjects, knowing that his authority is from God, may obey him in God and for God. This has been revolted from at times because it was used in the seventeenth century to support the doctrine of the divine right of kings, as though the sovereign power over our daily life were any less divine if it was the power of those appointed by the Christian commonwealth itself, and if it should take the form of a constitutional, not an arbitrary power, of a democracy rather than an aristocracy. Thus, through a pernicious controversy, the truth was on both sides lost sight of, — the great truth, which will become more operative as the clouds of controversy clear away, that the government of men is a divine function, and its holder, unless he deny his true vocation, the minister of God and of his Church. 2. In our Bidding Prayer, which gives the heads of prayer commended to the use of the people before the sermon, the notion is put aside, which has often been maintained, that the lay functions, which are established by God, do not belong to God's Church (though that Church is the body and the fullness of the Christ who fills all in all). We are bidden pray for Christ's Holy Catholic Church, that is, for the whole company of Christian people dispersed throughout the whole world; and *herein* (this is the important word — herein, that is, as an integral part of the Church) for the sovereign, who is supreme over all persons and causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil; for the judges and magistrates of the realm, that they may execute true justice in God's name; for the clergy, that they may fulfill their office aright; and for all orders of men, that in their several stations they may adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour. It is true that this prayer does not occur in the Liturgy of the Protestant Episcopal Church of America; but in the prayer in that Liturgy for the Church Militant, the petition for the Universal Church is followed at once by the prayer for all Christian rulers, that they may impartially administer justice and maintain virtue and religion; and this petition comes before that for the clergy, showing that its authors included the function of rulers as much as of clergymen among those of the Christian Church. I am not quoting these words as showing that every particular of our English system is applicable universally. No one would think of wishing to subject the various American bodies of worshipers to any control whatever but that of their own members. But I quote them to show that in one at least of the Reformed churches the doctrine of the universal priesthood is held fast, and is applied to the object of this lecture, the bearing of public services on the general and social welfare of the community.

Perhaps, having touched on the Liturgy of the Church of England, it may be well to point out the respective advantages of liturgical and extempore prayers in view of our present object. It is a strange thing, in our English congregations, that while those of the Anglican and Roman bodies use the liturgy exclusively, the others use nothing but extempore prayer. I presume that in America the same holds good for the most part. Yet, surely, the combination of the two is that which is most to be desired. There are advantages in each. A liturgical form, from its noble diction and its ancient associations, is most calculated to express those constant needs of the worshipers which relate to their permanent condition, both temporal and spiritual, the general confession of sin and thanksgiving for pardon, the praise which we offer to God for what He is and for what He has done for mankind; and also prayer for the chief things required by all sorts and conditions of men. And, further, in reference to our present subject, it insures that such petitions as we make for our rulers and for the general ordering of the world should not be omitted through any inadvertence. On the other hand, there are numerous circumstances which arise and give birth to special desires, for which a liturgical form makes no provision. There are also moments in which special spiritual needs are felt by the worshipers. Some phase of Christian experience has been strongly urged on their attention ; or a period of revival has come; or some special teaching is growing up, as to which fresh light is needed. And it is impossible to vary the liturgical forms to meet all such cases. They need to be expressed in the warm utterances of one who feels them and is in sympathy with the general movement of heart and mind.

It is true that for certain permanent needs provision might well be made in set forms of words. Since the liturgies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were formed, political and general society has largely changed. In particular, the sense of what we owe to the non-Christian races of mankind, whether in the way of missionary teaching or in the way of just government, so far as they are brought under our influence, was hardly felt at that time, but is now a great and growing interest with us all. It must be said also, with reference to our present object, that the constant reference to the Head of the Commonwealth, as if he stood alone as in Tudor times in England, is both insufficient and misleading. There is a passage in the work of the late Mr. Hare on Representation which put this very clearly. "The ancient customs of the kingdom," he says, "connect religion with its most important events and transitions. The coronation is accompanied by a humble recognition of the sovereignty of God over all." And he sets down the terms of the coronation service, which are very remarkable, the sovereign being consecrated as a minister of God in quite as strong terms as any bishop or minister of the word. He then adds: "This service should have a suitable parallel on the day of the election of the representative assembly, which should be set apart throughout the kingdom for the business of the election alone. A special service should be appointed for the Church" (he means the body of Anglican worshipers), "and all other persuasions should be invited, according to their several manners, to solemnize the public act and seek for it the divine blessing." He then quotes the words of Burke: "The sense of mankind has consecrated the commonwealth and all who officiate in it. This consecration is made, that all who administer the government of men, in which they stand in the person of God himself, should have high and worthy notions of their function and destination; that their hope should be full of immortality; and that man should as far as possible be approximated to his perfection."

I must not, at this point, enlarge upon the general needs of our social state. They will appear somewhat differently to different minds; and there is the danger, not merely of risking the disfavor of the interested or the prejudiced (which may have to be boldly faced), but of offending simple men, and throwing back a cause we feel to be important. The duty of adapting our public prayers to real social needs is, however, apparent, and must be accomplished with the aid of tact and of sympathy on the part of the minister.

I turn now to the ordinance of preaching;

and I think that it is specially important in this to dismiss from our minds the ideas of the last few centuries. We are apt to take our own customs as established institutions, and only to ask for light upon them so far as affects their use. A congregation, an ordained minister, a place of meeting, prayers and preaching calculated to raise our minds to spiritual things, these are presumed to be divine and unalterable. But we must assert that these, as well as the rest of the church system, are not of primary but of secondary importance, the one thing needful being through whatever means to imbibe and promote Christ's righteousness; and that the special ordinances, such as preaching, are capable of change, of modification, even of abolition.

What was the first preaching of the Gospel? It was a proclamation, a heralding. The good news was that the kingdom of heaven had arrived. It had long been expected, but now it was come: that is, the power by which it was to be made actual and effective was here among men, namely, God with us, showing the very nature of God in word and deed, and the cross (which was present from the first by anticipation) as the seal and consummation of this manifestation of God, the power by which all men were to be drawn to Him. And what was the kingdom? It was social beneficence in the widest sense, with all that leads to it and flows from it. "As ye go," said our Lord, "proclaim (not εὐαγγελίζεσθε, but κηρύσσετε,) saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand: heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." Those to whom this charge was given were quite incompetent to preach sermons; but they could announce that Christ had come, and in his name do acts of mercy.

Our Lord's own discourses can hardly furnish a precedent for the set sermons of after times; and the exhortations in the synagogues do not appear to have had any regularity; only, if some man of distinction came in, he was invited, at the close of the ordinary prayers and reading of the law and the prophets, to speak; as it was said to Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia: "Men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." In the meetings of the early Church, as has been pointed out, every one who chose took part, and probably the subjects of their utterances were very various. In the account of the Christian assemblies of the second century, Justin Martyr speaks of the president, after the reading of the writings of the prophets and apostles, making an exhortation to the people to follow their excellent examples. At Alexandria, the theological school, of which Partenus, Clement, and Origen were successively the leaders, gave instruction probably in methods similar to that which would have been given in a Greek school of philosophy, combating ideas like those of the then prevalent Gnostic sects. It is interesting to read of St. Paul's action at Ephesus, when, the members of the synagogue having turned against his preaching, he passed over into the philosophical school of Tyrannus. This, we may believe, gives us the twofold origin of the set sermon of later times, the synagogue and the philosophic school. On the one hand the practice of the synagogue would be followed, and would become more settled and systematic as the business of the Church became more extended, and the persecutions and heresies demanded more advice from the leaders to the people. On the other hand, the Greek philosopher was the ancestor of the set preacher in the Church. Justin Martyr wore the customary dress of the philosopher, and claimed that Christianity was the new and higher philosophy; and Dr. Hatch in his Hibbert Lectures has shown from Lucian and other critics of the second century how prevalent was the custom of inviting men of the well-known class of philosophers to give courses of lectures; while in other cases they were established in particular cities, and their neighbors and admirers maintained them. Both as a school of philosophy and as a continuation of the synagogue, the Christian Church in its meetings required set teaching. Accordingly by the middle of the third century we find the practice fully established, and Cyprian in his letter to his flock during the Decian persecution urges them not to despond or fall away because they can no longer meet in the congregation and hear the bishops preach. But the practice seems to have been spasmodic rather than continuous through the history of the Church. The great Fathers of the fourth century (except Jerome) were all notable preachers, of whom Chrysostom was the most remarkable. But the sermons seem not to have been regular parts of the service, and the applause and clapping of hands by which they were accompanied would remind men more of the philosophic lecture than of the solemn sermons of our day. In the curious scene in the Church of the Resurrection at Jerusalem described by Jerome, after Epiphanius of Cyprus had preached a sermon against Origenism, to which Bishop John of Jerusalem was supposed to incline, the latter spoke strongly against the Anthropomorphite heresy; upon which Bishop Epiphanius rose and said: "Our brother has spoken well in condemning this heresy, and it is desirable that he should now show us his condemnation of the opposite errors of Origen," and the people responded with ironical applause. From this it would appear that the sermon was rather occasional than regular, and that it arose out of special circumstances: though there would be courses of sermons like Chrysostom's Homilies, or the expositions of Scripture which Jerome gave daily in his monastery, or the instructions to catechumens of Cyril of Jerusalem. Jerome describes the lectures of Rufinus, how he had a pile of books upon the table, and how he commented upon the views of various writers, magisterially laying down the judgment which ought to be pronounced upon each of them. This was evidently a survival of the old philosophic lecture, which Dr. Hatch, in his most interesting Hibbert Lectures, seems to consider as the main if not sole source of the set sermon in the Christian Church. Dr. Hatch also thinks that the prophetical spirit, of which there was an outburst in the apostolic age, vanished before the set philosophical discourse. But it has reappeared from time to time. It is true that in the dark ages which followed after the middle of the fifth century, when the human intellect seemed for a time to have undergone an eclipse, preaching in any form was but little practiced. In the Church of Rome it is said that there were no sermons till those of St. Leo in the middle of the sixth century, and his practice does not seem to have been continued by his successors. When, however, the great missionary enterprise was commenced by which Britain and Germany were won, preaching was at least one great instrument of the missionaries, such as Aidan in Northumbria or Winfried (Boniface) in Germany; and this was preaching of the prophetic kind, which may be described in the words of the Psalmist: "I believed, and therefore have I spoken." There was another outburst of preaching in the days of St. Francis and St. Dominic, when the Friars, like Wesley and Whitfield in the eighteenth century, made their appeal to the masses of the people. And we may recall the work of Wycliffe and his poor priests in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. But the regular set sermon seems not to have become established till the Reformation. Throughout the Eastern churches, sermons have been rare. In Russia only one, and that of ten minutes, is preached in the year.

I think it results from this review that preaching is not, as it has usually been considered in the Anglican race since Puritan times, the chief and indispensable ordinance of religion, but first, that it is a matter over which the Church generally has full control; secondly, that it may be, as it has been, in one age, occasional, and in another constant and regular; thirdly, that its subjects may range over the whole life of the Christian community; and fourthly, that there is no one class of men to whom alone, as a matter of divine injunction, it is to be exercised.

When, then, we turn to the inquiry how preaching may, as a Christian ordinance, be the promoter of social progress, the preliminary question needs to be asked, whether it is to be preserved in the future; at least, whether it is to maintain the place which it has held in the Protestant churches during the last three and a half centuries. On the one side it may be pointed out, that the spread of education, the multiplication of books, and especially the vast increase of periodical literature, both religious and secular, has satisfied some of the needs which once were satisfied by preaching alone. When we read that the English Puritans, on a Fast Day, would begin the religious exercise early in the morning, and after two or three hours retire for a frugal dinner, and then continue during most of the afternoon, it appears to us that such practices must have been intolerable. But we have to remember that the sermon was the vehicle for almost all the intellectual pabulum which the people desired. It dealt with many questions of the day, in which they were thoroughly interested; and their circle of interests was very much more limited than ours. But the intellectual effort needed to follow it, the discussions which it provoked among the people in their homes and their places of meeting, made it the centre of culture in a way that it cannot be now. And this was the case even among educated people, for in the seventeenth century questions relating to religious observances, the difference of sects, the controversies and wars which arose out of them, held a much larger place in social and political life than they can do now. Burnet was a preacher to the educated; but he constantly had to hold up his hour-glass to show that the full hour had been taken up by his sermon, while the congregation called aloud to him to go on. Nor need we attribute the high position held by sermons merely to the interests of social and political life which they touched. The argumentative and practical parts of the sermon were also a subject of keen interest; but in the present day serious men and women will find these subjects discussed in many ways and places, and not in the so-called religious press alone; these matters are not shunned as they once were by the daily and monthly periodicals, still less by our novelists. They have been taken into our public and social life, and hold an ever larger place in our literature.

But on the other side it must be said that there is a vast difference between the merely individual and reflective process which is gone through by the solitary reader, and the effect on the mind of words addressed to an assembly of men and women by one who possesses their sympathy. If the set sermon be a formality, it will fail. If there is any suspicion of the preacher's sincerity, his power is gone. If it appear that he has got astray from his higher object, and is speaking conventional words, with but little relation to reality, that he is speaking because he is expected to speak and not because he has something which he wishes to communicate to his hearers, their confidence will pass away, and the contemptuous expressions sometimes heard, which would pare away the sermon to a vanishing point as the vehicle of a spirit of slumber rather than of life, will justify themselves. But where the congregation feel that the sermon is calculated to minister, to edify, to stimulate, to guide, and to comfort, and they sympathetically accept its influence, the repetition of the same great ideas from Sunday to Sunday in varying forms and with varying applications, must exert upon them a power which no reading can match. When we reflect on the multiplication of this process in thousands of centres and of the general agreement in the moral basis of Christianity and its chief doctrines, the power of preaching in maintaining the divine principle underlying all true life can hardly be exaggerated.

It is, however, a melancholy truth that the poorest class, especially in our great modern cities, seems little affected whether by preaching or by the church system generally. Richard Rothe, indeed, the great blender of religion with ethics and social life, looked with satisfaction upon this as indicating that the masses of the people were drawn to the religion of life rather than to that of ordinances. But that the common people should be unaffected by appeals on the most serious matters of life, that the poor to whom it was Christ's glory that the gospel was preached, the common people who heard Him gladly, should not respond to our exhortations, seems to indicate some flaw in our methods. And the fact that the wealthy and cultured attend, but the struggling and needy do not, makes a division in society which cannot be viewed without alarm. That women also are affected rather than men is not a satisfactory phenomenon. And it may be well to devote the remainder of this lecture to the consideration of means by which it may be remedied.

1. Is not the range of subjects supposed to be suited for the pulpit too limited? And are not preachers apt to be talking of what interests them as theologians, of what they learned at college, or of what they hear in church synods or ministers' meetings, while their hearers are concerned with problems in the domestic, the social, and the more public relations? The minds of men are set upon social reforms, and these are amongst the chief things with which religion is concerned. They must be recognized in the preaching of our day. The power of the gospel must be felt in the promotion of temperance, of social purity, of thrift, of sanitation, of the better housing of the poor in large cities; the question of old age pensions for the poorest classes must be considered again and again till some solution is found; the evil system of limiting families for the sake of a life of ease and wealth must be denounced by a united ministry and Christian opinion; and it must be seen that the advance of knowledge and cul-

ture is not merely not looked on as hostile by our ministers and worshipers, but is welcomed and furthered by them with energy.

We have seen in a former lecture that these and the like things are constantly present in the teaching of the Bible; and the Bible is the source from which we must draw. I do not know that it is obligatory to choose a Bible text for every sermon, though a sermon with a Bible text will probably be received with greater confidence and be better remembered; and if it be true, as was pointed out in a former lecture, that the Bible is the record of a training in social righteousness, it must, to those who perceive this, be the best repertory of examples, and it is always ready for our use. But the text must not be a bare text, but be shown as carrying with it the spirit of the writer and of the book in which it is found. The ideas must not be reduced to dead dogmas, but shown as living principles. The words of the law and the prophets and psalmists and apostles must be shown in their full value, breathing and burning against wrong, and comforting and raising those that are down. We must make men feel that the same moral and social power which saved Israel through its long career of perils, and sent out the Christian Church on its career of social beneficence, is alive with us still, to strengthen the moral foundations of our society.

And the central truth of the Bible, the manifestation of God in Christ, must be used in the same way. St. Paul speaks of the "philanthropy" of God our Saviour, and we need not dissever that expression from its modern associations. Nor need we think of the climax of that manifestation in the crucifixion as separate in this regard from the rest. It has been called lately in a remarkable work an evolutionary force, that is, a power of self-sacrifice which so reconciles men to God that they partake of his beneficence and are willing like Him to suffer in giving effect to it. When Tennyson spoke in "In Memoriam" of the Christmas bells ringing in the Christ that is to be, some good people were scandalized. What! Is not Christ crucified the Christ for every age? Yes, we may reply; and Christ crucified is the only instrument by which may be brought in that nobler time, with "sweeter manners, purer laws," of which the poet sang.

2. I have hitherto spoken in accordance with the present condition of things, which presumes that a single man constantly addressing a congregation is the inevitable type of the preaching function. But is not the weakness which we complain of, namely, the appearance of the aloofness of preaching from the common interest of men, to a great extent due to this very idea? It is true that the necessity of the division of functions, and the just demand for adequate learning in those who address a learned age, require the existence of a class of preachers who have made this one work the business of their lives. But does it follow from this that there is no place for the other worshipers in enforcing Christian truth and duty? There are some denominations of Christians whose meetings for worship and instruction take the form of a conference rather than a set sermon from a single teacher. The word homily, which was used in Greek for a sermon, implies an imparting, with some feeling also for its being mutual. The French word *conférence* best represents it, as meaning strictly a comparison of thoughts by the members of the community, though it also is used for a discourse or

less regular sermon. Certainly there are some persons who find much more edification in meetings where each speaks his mind, and where their own minds are stimulated by the thought that they may add something to the common stock of ideas, than by remaining in a passive attitude of mere receptiveness. The Epistle to the Hebrews speaks strongly of the danger of those who remain all their life long in the infantile condition of learners, "when," the writer says, "for the time ye ought to be teachers." This mutual teaching and edification seems to have been the practice of the Corinthian church, and though the scene described is irregular, the apostle does not blame it, but merely urges that all should be done decently and in order. It might not be possible that such conferences should be held in our regular services themselves; but I think provision should be made for them at certain times.

And if we admit that no order of preachers was set up by divine authority, we cannot think it right that we should be deprived of the benefit of the advice of unordained men in pulpit teaching. There are many men who, as men of science, or as artists, or as literary men, or statesmen, or merchants, or leaders of popular movements, are men also of earnest faith; and that such men should from time to time bear their testimony would be of the greatest value. But the process must be free; they must show how religion really appears to the class which they represent, and how it blends with their pursuits, and what influence those pursuits may exert upon it in return. And they must have power to criticise, and to say freely what parts of our systems and teaching do not commend themselves to them, as well as why they support its principles. For the worst of all dangers to religion, in all classes, is the impression often given that there are certain conventional ideas and ways to which church members are bound to conform, while their belief, except in the sense of formal adherence, may be weak or null.

3. Preachers must, like all other intellectual workers, submit themselves to criticism. Public opinion, which contains the opinion of all who can best appreciate the matter in hand, though it may contain much besides, has a right to be heard. Even in art this is the case. There have been artists who have maintained that art is to be followed merely for

art's sake, and that none but artists have a right to judge of it. But I quote from a very discriminating article lately published on "Ruskin, the Servant of Art" a few lines, in which, if "theology" or "religiousness" be substituted for the word "art," my meaning will be best expressed. "That art, surely, is the highest which touches our nature at the highest, appealing to our reason and our spirit. . . . Until it can be shown that an artistic faculty is higher than the human reason, the art which cannot be brought into touch with reason stands, *ipso facto,* on a lower plane. By all means let the critic respect the artist's judgment on technique. . . . By all means let artists value most the judgment of their peers. . . . But their skill is naught but as a talisman to charm and stimulate mankind, the consumer — not the ignorant or base, indeed, but the man of general cultivation, the critic, the χαρίεις of Aristotle. And when the critic feels that the technique, the means employed, are such as to obscure or falsify the true ends of painting, he must no longer defer to the artist's technical superiority, but must boldly pronounce that technique to be faulty and inadequate." If this be true in regard to art, much more is it true in regard to religion, which has in it, far more than art, the character of universality. Is there a single man or woman or child to whom we do not make our appeal? And is there one of them who cannot tell whether his conscience responds or does not respond to our words? It is often thought to be enough that a minister gets a following of persons like himself, who thoroughly appreciate and honor him. But the danger is that they may merely echo his thoughts, and imbibe even his peculiarities. He learns nothing from them, and they learn less and less from him. And outside his own circle he is discounted or ignored, and loses all power for good. Religion has to do with the social welfare of mankind, and its ordinances must be judged by the question, How far are they felt to conduce to social progress?

4. Lastly, let men bear in mind who they are to whom sermons are addressed, and with what object the address is made. Is not much of the comparative ineffectiveness of modern sermons due to a misunderstanding of our Christian calling? It seems as if men were addressed as casual beings, gathered

fortuitously, and to be helped in some vague way along the path of knowledge and piety. But the members of a Christian congregation are something very different from this. They are sworn soldiers of Christ, pledged to make their whole life a contribution to the establishment of his kingdom among men, every function of whose being is a spiritual gift, and their callings the means through which they may show out Christ's image and attract men to Him. I venture to quote a passage from an essay of the late Sir John Seeley, of Cambridge, England, as to this primary assumption of a Christian company, and the effect which this assumption would have upon sermons.

"Those who meet within the church walls on Sunday would not meet as strangers who find themselves together within the walls of the same lecture hall, but as coöperators in a public work, the object of which all understand, and to his own department of which each man habitually applies his mind and contriving power. Thus meeting, with the *esprit de corps* strong among them, and with a clear perception of the purpose of their union and their meeting, they would not require that the exhortation of their preacher should be what in the nature of things it can seldom be, eloquent. It might cease then to be either a despairing or overwrought appeal to feelings which grow more callous the oftener they are excited to no definite purpose, or a childish discussion of some deep point in morals or divinity, best left to philosophers. It might then become weighty with business, and impressive as an officer's address to his troops before a battle. For it would be addressed by a soldier to soldiers, in the presence of an enemy whose character they understood, and in the war with whom they had given and received telling blows. It would be addressed to an ardent and hopeful association, who had united for the purpose of contending, within a given district, against disease and distress, of diminishing, by every contrivance of kindly sympathy, the ignorance, rudeness, coarseness, and improvidence of the poor, and the heartlessness and hardness of the rich; for the purpose of securing to all that moderate happiness which gives leisure for virtue, and that moderate occupation which removes the temptation to vice; for the purpose of providing a large and wide education for the young; lastly, for the purpose of handing on the traditions of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, maintaining the enthusiasm of humanity in all the baptized, and of reserving, in opposition to all temptation to superstition and fanaticism, the filial freedom of the worship of God."

VI

PASTORAL WORK

The precedents of former ages will not serve us altogether in the present day ; and if it be acknowledged that we have to adapt our Christian ordinances to the changing phases of life, acknowledging those changes to be a part of God's providential leading, we must take care that we are not bound by the fetters of the past. We need not contemplate revolutionary changes, nor, because we assert that we are free to move, mean by this that we are bound to move far, and at once. But yet the knowledge that we are not obliged to be always as we have been is necessary for freedom of thought on our subject as well as for any action we may see necessary.

The idea of the Christian pastorate is one of the most alluring of all sides of the Christian life. The thought of a man set apart to do good to all, but specially to the weak or poor or young or erring, combining in his activity the temporal and spiritual good of his flock, is one of the purest products of our religion; and men who have cared nothing for our doctrines or our worship have felt the power of the pastorate, and would maintain it even if all other Christian institutions were to pass away. Perhaps no better defense of the Gospel could be imagined than a pastoral history of Christianity. It would show the power of Christ over individuals and over various phases of society in a way which more than any might convince men that He is Saviour and Lord of all. But it would show also by how many different processes this power has been exercised. We should have different methods in the East and West. We should see at one time authoritative discipline, at another unrestrained liberty. We should find one pastor working steadily on, trusting to persistence in ordinary methods, another feeling the necessity of stirring men constantly out of their lethargy. We should have before us the relative advantages of the territorial system, which takes the whole body of people living upon a certain area, in all the relations of life, and tries to build up society on a Christian basis; and the congregational system, which gathers together those who agree and trust one another into one fellowship, that they may fortify each other and thus influence the larger world around them. Perhaps no more vivid picture of a Christian pastor is to be found than that given by Chaucer, for which he is supposed to have taken Wycliffe for his model. Wycliffe, after a noble life of intellectual combat, retired to Lutterworth and undertook the pastoral office, as one who felt that in the simple work of training his flock, by giving them the Scriptures in their own vernacular English, and by the simple tracts which he wrote for them, he might furnish a centre and an example for the christianizing of the common people which might be propagated by his poor priests throughout England. Chaucer thus describes the pastor's work: —

A good man there was of religion,
That was a poorè persoun of a town;
But rich he was of holy thought and work,
He was also a learned man, a clerk,
That Christes Gospel trewly wolde preache;
His parishens devoutly would he teache.

Benigne he was, and wonder diligent:
And in adversity full patient.
Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder;
But he ne left nought for no rain nor thunder,

> In sickness and in mischief to visite
> The furthest in his parish, much or lite,
> Upon his feet, and in his hand a staff.
> This noble example to his sheep he gave
> That first he wrought, and afterwards he taught.

The pastorate embraces men of the most different stamp, men like the Borromeos, in Italy, Charles and Federigo, men like Oberlin in the Vosges, or Felix Neff in the High Alps, or like pastor Fliedner of Kaiserswerth, or Baxter at Kidderminster, or Venn of Huddersfield, or Keble at Hursley, or Jonathan Edwards and a thousand others in America. We should see, I believe, in such a pastoral church history as I have supposed, that in every country and under every form, while controversies have been rife which fill our ordinary church histories, and while the surface of Christian ordinances may have much in it that might pain us, there has been exerted very widely a pastoral influence over individuals and over society, sometimes in restricted, sometimes in wider circles, for which we could unfeignedly rejoice.

But we must not linger on the past. Our age is one which moves rapidly, and the social objects which our pastoral system must embrace are to a large extent the product of our day. They demand new methods, and we have the experience of eighteen centuries to guide us.

First, then, we must ask whether the position assigned to the pastor is suitable to the work of an age of democratic activity, when all men are summoned to take part in all spheres of public life. Is the idea of a clergy, of a set of men specially set apart for this pastoral office, and on whom devolves, in each locality, the whole duty of maintaining Christian ordinances and stimulating the Christian life, one which we are bound to take as final and of divine authority? The answer must be, I think, in reference to this as to other parts of our church system, that it is in some form or other a necessity, but that there is nothing to prevent any changes in it which may be required to adapt it to changed conditions of society. Such adaptations, I think, have been much hindered by the claim to rest it on some divine but unsupported sanction. In the East it has been rested on authority which is neither defined nor questioned; in the Roman Catholic Church, on the papal decrees; the Anglican has rested it on apostolical succession by laying on of hands; the Puritan on the authority of Scripture. But none of these appear satisfactory in a day when each institution is called to justify itself on grounds of utility and of the needs of social life.

It is becoming the persuasion of those among us who have most deeply studied the early history of the Church and its institutions that no special form of organization was given by the authority of our Lord or of the Scriptures. This indeed was the contention of the best writers of English Christianity from the Reformation onwards, till what is called the Oxford movement; it was the contention of Hooker, who refused to ground episcopacy on a divine command, although tempted both by his own conviction of the necessity of episcopacy and by the counter-claim made by the Puritans that the Genevan church polity had, and alone had, a scriptural authority; and of Pearson, who maintains that the principle of government is alone divine, while the form is variable. And these writers have been reinforced in the present day by almost every writer of distinction who has examined the subject, from Lightfoot, in Cambridge in England, thirty years ago, to Allen, in Cambridge in America, in his late learned work on Christian institutions. But I am not sure whether the idea does not haunt us still that a certain thing which is called "The Ministry" has a sanction which no other social function has, a sanction which would prevent any large modification of it, however necessary it might be.

If I have been right in my contention that the Church has not for its primary destination the duty of public worship, but that of a complete life of Christian righteousness, then it is impossible that an office should have existed from the first for the conduct of public worship which should be the one central authoritative office of the Church. Yet even those writers who have done so much to clear away false views of supposed authority seem almost to imply that, while the growth of particular offices, whether of bishop or pastor, was gradual and subject to change, these offices are the essential and central feature of the Christian Church, and that, once formed, they must remain. The facts do not appear to me to warrant this view.

It is important to examine the offices which are often considered to be the only offices existing in the Church, so as to show that none of them have an exclusive right, but that we are free in the adaptation of our system to modern needs. In the rudimentary organizations which we find in the epistles to the Corinthians and Ephesians we have a great variety of names, apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, evangelists, besides thaumaturgists, speakers with tongues, helps, and governments. But these, as Professor Hort has pointed out in his "Christian Ecclesia," are names denoting functions, not orders or offices. We find the apostles, prophets, and teachers again in the Didachè, and they are still, as St. Paul placed them, first, second, and third. But their influence is waning; and the writer, expressing what he believes to be the mind of Christ's original Twelve, bids the Gentile churches give heed to their bishops and deacons, since they also do the work of teachers. The bishops and deacons seem, therefore, to have been officers not originally charged with the duties of prayer and teaching, which were conducted quite freely, as we see from St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, but to have been officers originally of lower authority, having to do with finance and its administration. But towards the beginning of the second century, two changes took place: first, there came to be one bishop instead of the many who existed at Ephesus and at Philippi in St. Paul's days; and, secondly, they became by degrees the chief officers of the Church in common prayer and the holy communion, till, in the days of Trajan, Ignatius is able to say, Let nothing be done apart from the bishop. This change, however, was not effected with like rapidity everywhere. The churches of Asia seem to have been before the rest in their organization.

Meanwhile, what were the πρεσβύτεροι, or elders? Later times have given them a special function, but one which has undergone frequent changes, especially in the churches of the Reformation. But in the earliest times the use of the words elder and bishop was often synonymous, so that Jerome's dictum, that they originally were not two offices but one, maintained its hold down to our own generation. The fact, however, appears to be that the word elder at first represented not so much an office as a standing in the church out of which other offices were gradually formed. The name comes from the Jews, and among them it represented the local authorities generally, of which there were at least two divisions — the Soferim or ruling officers and the Shofetim or judges. It was the elders of Israel who, before the battle in which Eli's sons were slain, demanded that the ark should be brought into the camp. It was the elders of Jezreel who judged Naboth, and the elders of Samaria, as administrators, who slew the sons of Ahab. When, then, the word is removed from Old Testament use to New, we are prepared to find that it represents, not a single office, but an honored position accorded in the first instance to age.[1] In Acts xi. we find the contributions of the church at Antioch sent to the elders at Jerusalem; and in Acts xv. we find that the letter embodying the findings of the council are sent by the apostles and "elder brethren," a term which seems exactly to represent the idea I have just sketched out. When, then, we find Paul and Barnabas in their founding of the churches of Galatia (I adopt Renan's and Ramsay's view in thus calling them) ordaining elders by election, we may believe that this was the choosing of a body of general managers of the affairs of the community. Of these some would gradually take the title of bishop or overseer, as having the management of affairs and money, while others had less definite functions, perhaps some fulfilling the humbler duties of deacon. It seems at least reasonable to think that when St. Paul sent for the elders of Ephesus, the deacons who ministered especially to the poor (if such an office existed at Ephesus) would not be excluded, when so much of his discourse to them related to the care of the poor. At Philippi, where St. Paul addressed his epistle to the bishops and deacons, we cannot infer that these two classes included all the recognized offices or functions: it is probable that there were other elders, and that the special mention of bishops and deacons is due to the fact that it was through their hands, as charged with finance, that he had received the gifts of the Philippian church.

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[1] Compare the use of the expression *πᾶν τὸ πρεσβυτέριον* of the Jewish rulers including the priests (Luke xxii. 66 — see Riv. Ver., and Acts xxii. 5), with its use for the heads of the Christian Church in 1 Tim. iv. 10. Cf. also the use of the words *προεστῶτες* and *ἡγούμενοι* as implying a standing rather than an office.

I have hazarded these remarks as to the position of elders as showing that it is impossible to get from the New Testament a support for a theory that there existed a distinct and defined office of elders which the Church was bound to perpetuate in all generations.

And so as to bishops and deacons. If we endeavor to maintain that there have always been and must always be bishops by divine injunction, we must ask on the other side, What is meant by the name? It is certain that what is meant now is a single man having the supreme direction of the affairs of a body existing for the purposes of public worship and its accessories; that there must be one bishop and no more in the city, except, of course, where there are coadjutor or suffragan bishops, who constitute a mere extension of the individual office; that he has under him a diocese extending over the country round; and that each small town or village must be under some city bishop. But in the New Testament we find nothing of all this. We have at Philippi or Ephesus not a bishop, but bishops; we find that they were not so much ministers of public worship as high almoners. There is no intimation that they had any diocese, — a name adopted later from the arrangement of the Roman empire in the East, — nor even, except in a few cases, any authority over any one outside the city.

And we know that for a long time after the apostolic age each village had its own bishop, so that in the provinces of North Africa in the middle of the third century it was possible for Cyprian to bring together eighty bishops to a council, and in the time of Augustine many more. It was only by degrees that the arrangements were made which we find in the later Middle Ages where the clerical system was brought to maturity. It was one of the objects of the False Decretals in the ninth century to get rid of the country bishops and to bring all the small towns and villages under the diocesans. And there is a witness to the older state of things in the fact that in Italy, where church organization grew up at the earlier stage of development, there are, if I am rightly informed, some six hundred bishops, while in England, which was organized on the diocesan system, there have never been more than thirty. These facts certainly show that the theory that a distinct and defined office of bishop, having always the same functions, has existed from the first by divine authority, and must continue by the same authority, cannot be sustained. It grew, and changed, and may change again, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, according to the circumstances ordained by the Providence of God.

Similarly, with reference to deacons. In apostolic times they existed in some churches, in others not. But their functions rendered them necessary; and in Rome, where there was a vast population of poor, which had been largely provided for by the imperial authorities, the officers who had to do with relief of the poorer members took a high position in the church, especially on the decay of the imperial system. They assisted in the communion; indeed, when the communion still was a place where the poor were fed, they were indispensable; and their head, the archdeacon, was the next officer after the Pope, as also he became in some other dioceses, notably at Canterbury. They became afterwards merely a subordinate body of those who after a year's experience became presbyters.

My object in this review of the fortunes of these church offices has been to vindicate freedom. Each of them has changed again and again, so as to mean something quite different from what its designation originally implied. The liberty which the Church has used in former times still exists: no one form of the pastorate is prescribed. What, then, is to be the guide in the use of this liberty? First, the social principle on which the institution is founded; and, secondly, the social needs of the present time. Let us dwell for a few moments on each of these.

Is the episcopal form of the pastorate a divine necessity? If it be meant by this that Christ gave a command that there should be dioceses, each having a bishop over it, or that there should be one bishop only in each place, or that the succession must be conveyed by imposition of hands, or that a man once consecrated is to be bishop for life of a particular see or of any see, I think history shows that all such assumptions are erroneous. We are on much safer ground when we consider the social principle involved, which experience enables us to state as a law. It is this: that every society requires one head who must be charged with the well-being of the institution and act as its motive power. Every nation has its chief of the state, whether king or president; every city has its mayor, every company its chairman. The principle is the matter of importance, not the mode of its application. The words of St. Paul about the divine functions of rulers were perverted when applied to the divine right of hereditary kings as opposed to rulers who might be set up by a Parliament; they would have been applied with perfect justice to the divinity inherent in the office of a ruler of men. And in the same way, we may believe that it was a divine necessity which caused the gradual appointment of one man to hold the chief authority in each of the early churches. But the changes which we have traced were also made in obedience to divine necessities which made themselves felt. And, if so, we must recognize the legitimacy of many other changes. In the Presbyterian system the episcopal principle is recognized in the appointment of a moderator; in the Methodist body in England by a yearly president of the Conference; while the American Methodists retain the name of bishops for their rulers. And in those bodies which cannot see it right to go further in the way of organization than the single congregation, the pastor as the directing head is the embodiment of the same principle. When this is fully accepted, it cannot but lead to peace and mutual recognition. What effect it will have upon the continuance of particular organizations formed on the assumption that they are bound to remain separate from others because of a supposed divine command which is found not to exist, I will not here discuss.

We must apply a similar reasoning to the diaconate. We hear sometimes that it needs to be restored. And, certainly, if we think of the office of a deacon as now exercised in Episcopalian bodies, that is, as a subordinate ministry of the word and sacraments for a limited period, we cannot but feel that much is wanting which the early churches supplied. But then the sole care of the poor rested upon them. Now in every civilized and Christian community some care of the poor is undertaken by the government itself; and for those who refuse to place the national functions outside the Christian Church, the recognition of the principle of the diaconate must be found in such functions as those held in England by guardians of the poor or relieving officers. When no such provision is made by the government, the private charity of Christians must do the work, and those who administer help to the poor will be our modern deacons. Only, experience shows us the great evils which result from the attempt to do this work with the imperfect light and power of separate worshiping bodies. We should look upon the formation of societies for the relief of distress, or charity organization, as following out the principle which originally founded the diaconate. Their secretaries and almoners and committees are doing the work of the primitive deacon, and should so be recognized.

If we take the third branch of the threefold ministry which has been presumed to have a divine authority, that of the presbyters, we have seen that by degrees they became a separate order, and that first the duty of discipline, and later on the general pastorate, devolved upon them. But even when, on the formation of dioceses and of parishes, they gradually had the whole superintendence of the church work, which was a share in the episcopal power passed over to them (and the process of institution implies this), they had the name of rector, not of preacher, a reminiscence of the fact that ruling rather than worship and instruction was their primitive destination. Attempts have been made at times to restore to them the function of discipline which they certainly exercised at first; but the difficulties which have stood in the way of this have been a constant protest against the narrowing of the church down to a system of worship and ordinances. In the Presbyterian churches the title of elders is given to quite subordinate officers, who have but a very limited sphere of activity; and the discipline they administer can only be exercised through admission to or rejection from the communion. In the interesting account by Dr. Leonard Bacon of the First Church at New Haven, there is nothing more striking than the petty and prying action which passed for church discipline; and the reflection cannot but be forced upon us how much grander and more consonant with the objects of Christianity is the discipline of the laws of a Christian commonwealth. The communion is now but little available for purposes of discipline. It is no longer as it was at first, the universal and obligatory ordinance, to attendance on which manifest advantages, both temporal and spiritual, are attached. No great loss of standing is incurred by a man for absenting himself from it. Further, public opinion is strong in the general community, and an open evil liver is not likely to present himself at the Lord's table. And, what is still more important, the province of the national law has increased in extent and in authority, so that the chief part of the sins which were dealt with by the penitentiaries of the early Middle Ages have passed into modern codes. The judges and officers of the law are the true agents of discipline for the church of modern times.

If, however, the title of presbyter was originally, as I have suggested, a general title for those exercising authority in a Christian community, we must recognize the presence of the presbyteral action, not in any special functionaries, but rather in the whole body of those charged with the government of society. The judges and magistrates of a Christian country are doing God's work as much as those in Israel to whom it was said by the Psalmist, "I have said that ye are Gods, and all of you the children of the most high." Those who frame our laws are engaged in as divine a work as Moses when he brought forth from the presence of God the book of the Covenant. The administrators who conduct the affairs of the community are as truly ministers of God as the elders of Israel in every city. The diplomatists to whom the peace of the world is confided are ministers of the Prince of Peace. All these would have been spoken of by the prophets of Israel as shepherds of the people; and it is of such shepherds, not of preachers only or of ministers of public worship, that our Lord spoke, when He contrasted the bad, self-seeking, hireling shepherd with the good shepherd who is full of self-sacrifice. Can we dare to narrow down our Saviour's meaning, or to think of such functions as being merely secular and worldly, instead of following in the path of his discernment, and seeing how vast a social and spiritual power is exercised by them, and how truly those who hold such offices are shepherds of the flock of God?

It may be asked, then, whether such officers can ever conceivably be reckoned as pastors of the Church in the same way as the ordained ministers of the word and sacraments; in answer to which it must be said that we cannot tell precisely in what direction practical opinion may turn; yet, surely, there can be nothing more incongruous in our thinking of a judge or an administrator as an officer of the Church than in St. Paul's speaking of him as one of the powers that be, who, he says, are ordained of God. The mere act of ordination, though it gives a man a position in the estimation of the Church, and an assurance of a divine sanction which is a power to him in his work, is, as has been pointed out before, only the recognition of what the divine spirit has already made him. And, though at first those who were set apart as church officers included all the functions of public men, so far as was possible in small communities, the functions of the ordained were gradually limited to public worship and its immediate adjuncts. This was perhaps inevitable. But it was certainly misleading; and we must seek to restore the juster estimate. In the small community of Positivists in London, it is the custom, when one of their members undertakes any public office, to dedicate him solemnly as fulfilling a ministry to humanity. An account of a ceremony of this kind, held for a member who was appointed British consul in the far East, was published a few years ago, with a discourse by

Mr. Frederick Harrison. It is sometimes said that Positivism is a parody of Christianity. But if Christian people continue to ignore the sacredness of secular callings, it will come to pass that Positivism will represent the Christian idea more fully than a community which bears the Christian name.

But let us suppose that the idea sketched out is fully acknowledged. I do not mean that a ceremony of ordination is attached to every appointment to an office, but that every person holding office is looked upon as filling a post in which he is a minister of God, — does this imply that no pastorate need exist, such as is now universal amongst us, the presidency over a community united for prayer and Christian instruction, and the carrying on of operations connected with these functions? By no means; for we hold ourselves free. Whatever relations the pastorate as at present conceived may be thought to hold to the presbyterate of ancient times, it has won for itself a position which fully justifies its maintenance, call it by what name we may. And I think that in all our Christian bodies it has in the main the same functions. The Roman priest may dwell more on coming to mass, and may be too formal in his special ministrations to the sick and dying. The Anglican clergyman may be at times too exclusive, and may try too much to bring every one to the model of his Prayer Book. The Presbyterian may be too rigid in his forms; the Congregationalist may depend too much on sermons and addresses; the Methodist on constant revivals. But they are all teaching the word of God according to their best lights and endeavors; they are all leading men to approach to God in prayer and sacrament; and they are all ministers of Christian beneficence. What direction, then, may we think should be given to their duties by the larger social outlook which we have claimed for the Church?

1. If the pastor is to be a social leader, it is evident that he must act as little as possible alone. There are matters of doctrine, no doubt, on which he must make up his mind — often in lonely thought. Yet even in these, conference with others will help him; and often his conclusions will be the sounder for being compared with those of men differing from himself, and in other callings than his own. In a remarkable American work which has been largely read on both sides of the

Atlantic, however we may admire the attempt to get men to walk in the steps of Christ, we can hardly feel that the full idea of Christian sociality has been reached. Society is a very complex organism, and the good and evil in it are strangely mixed. We see some evil, or group of evils, and we are inclined to think, if these can by any means be overcome, it will be well. But we may be sure that if there is anything in our methods that savors of fanaticism and makes it appear that we are conscious only of one class of evils, we may be acting in a manner very different from the sweet reasonableness, the ἐπιείκεια, which Matthew Arnold rightly spoke of as the essential feature of Christ's manner of teaching. He went about doing good; He came eating and drinking. Those who, to counteract the corroding licentiousness of the Roman world in the fourth century, brought in the monastic system, did not realize that they were destroying the family, the most precious and divine of human relations, the best training ground for heaven.

To take an instance from our own times, Tennyson in his youthful days wrote in his "Locksley Hall" a fine outburst of indignation against the lazy squire life of England. He represents a young and ardent intellectualist who had looked forward to a noble, ideal life, though amid poor surroundings, with the cousin who had pledged her faith to him. The man for whose sake his love has been torn from the young and ardent progressist appears to him a kind of boor, caring only for low pleasures, and she will be to him "something better than his dog, a little dearer than his horse;" and he breaks away to go whither the breeze roaring seaward may carry him, cursing the conventionalities which drag life down. But after sixty years the same parties appear on the scene; the squire, though he has maintained his love for sport, has been the centre of much good in his neighborhood, caring for the poor, promoting education, and in old age honored by all, so that the indignant enthusiast of the earlier time speaks to his grandson of him whom his judgment had wronged: —

> Move among your people, know them, follow him who led the way,
> Strove for sixty widow'd years to help his homelier brother men,
> Served the poor, and built the cottage, raised the school, and drained the fen.

Hears he now the Voice that wrong'd him? Who shall
swear it cannot be?
Earth would never touch her worst, were one in fifty such
as he.

We are often but narrow judges of the all-comprehensive goodness of Christ, and our conclusions may be purged and modified, and what is good in them strengthened, by hearing how others conceive of them. Above all, let us never forget that, in social work, we are dealing, not with a mass of reprobates, but with those who still bear the divine image, the weak and erring children of God. It is, indeed, true that many excellent men are unwilling to enter into questions relating to Christian work. They have been accustomed to look upon such things as the pastor's business, they are busy with their own affairs; it is enough for them, they would say, to get the comfort of religion on Sunday. They will help with money, but take no part in the work which they support. And, meanwhile, there may be some who are only too ready to tender advice, somewhat willful, perhaps, and pushing. But none of us has the right to put aside his responsibility for the social welfare of those about him, or to refuse to take any pains to benefit them. Such a spirit belongs to the selfish individualism which is, it may be hoped, passing away. And when an opportunity is given, by some parochial council or similar means, of conferring upon the methods to be adopted by the worshiping body as an instrument of aggressive Christianity to combat the evils around them, we may expect that the members will rally to the standard; and, when they have exercised the gifts of counsel and inventiveness, will follow them up with practical endeavors. Such a council should become a focus where the gifts of all should be drawn out for the benefit of all.

2. It may be thought to conflict with these views of social Christianity, that the pastorate has largely to do with individual cases, with the admission of the young to confirmation or their joining the body of worshipers in their first communion, or again with the help which may be given in spiritual difficulties or the comfort of the mourner. But I think that, in all these, the social bearing of the Christian life should be kept in view. Do not half the spiritual difficulties, which at times beget a morbid state of the soul, come

from the fact that men and women are brooding upon some little trouble which they exaggerate, and which can hardly be acquitted of some tinge of selfishness, instead of learning to forget themselves in some good work in the service of their fellows? Have not mourners constantly found that their truest consolation has lain in going forth out of themselves to help their fellow sufferers? "Go, bury thy sorrows — Let others be blest." And, when some candidate or inquirer begins to be drawn towards our company, and thinks of throwing in his lot with us, it is of the utmost importance that he should understand that he is not joining a body of men who are content with the satisfaction of their personal spiritual needs, with forgiveness and the assurance of blessedness, but of men who have in St. Paul's words, "put on Christ," who are linked with Him in his work as the Redeemer of mankind. A noble saying is attributed to one of our English bishops: "We have too long been content to ask: 'What must I do to be saved?' Let us begin to ask: 'What have I been saved to do?'" This may appear a hard saying to beginners; but it will not remain so if the body itself is working in this spirit; for there is nothing more alluring and more inspiriting than Christian work undertaken with brightness and zeal.

3. What form, it may be asked, should such efforts of Christian bodies take? But the answer can only partially be given. For, in the first place, the avenues for Christian effort are very multifarious. If we realize how great is the bearing of knowledge of all kinds, of art, of amusement, of athletic exercises, of opportunities of rest and fresh air for the toilers in our cities, of holiday excursions for children, and many similar things, upon the well-being of those around us, we see a field for enterprise which is practically without limit. Some of these things we can compass, and some we must perforce let alone. In some places many of these matters are provided for by other bodies of Christian people, or by the general community. Men develop special gifts, some in one place, others in another; and it is well that experiments should be tried in special localities, which, if they succeed, may be taken up in others. There are two things which should be well impressed on every pastor's mind. The first is the importance of setting men to work in

Christ's cause; and to choose this rather than to do the work himself. Frequently it will happen that some good work has to be undertaken; it may be difficult to see who can undertake it, and the labor of finding out those who are likely to do it is considerable. To approach one or another, to explain the matter, to invite their services, to risk a refusal, — all this is hard. And one who may be willing may not be very capable or well instructed, and may need teaching and training; and all this takes time. We could do it in half the time and with half the trouble ourselves. But the other side of the matter comes in with irresistible force. The pastor is a former of workers. He is president of a body of workers; and he is not to consider his time wasted when he is engaged in such work, any more than a teacher of mathematics is entitled to say, I could work the problem myself, when the object is to give the pupil the power to work it. The benefit is double and treble in the end. The church member learns to become a member indeed, a full and living member: the work is better done by forming a new centre of initiative and its continuance is guaranteed: and the pastor is relieved of a work which may be like the serving of tables in the apostles' time, that he may give himself more undistractedly to prayer and the ministry of the word.

The other thing needed is trustfulness. We are apt to forget that the gifts of the spirit are not limited to the clergy and ministers (as we call them too exclusively, for all Christian workers are ministers). And, even when we see men undertaking some good work, we may be disposed to think that they need constant supervision. The pastor must risk something occasionally. Too minute a supervision is discouraging to the worker. It often partakes of the character of suspicion. Each Christian man has a spiritual gift; when the work is done by another man instead of him, the spirit in him is quenched, and the pastor's highest duty is to draw it forth, and to trust to the spirit's work. Each man who has some power of leading should be encouraged to consider the work his own. It is by appropriation, by throwing our personality into it, that we do the most. There are difficulties, no doubt, and there are exceptions, but for the most part it may be said, The trust of the pastor is the worker's strength.

4. But there is a jealousy of another kind of which the pastor will need to be aware. He may think that all Christian work is to go on directly within the circle of the worshiping body. I dwell advisedly upon the distinction between the body of men united for worship, and the larger idea of the Church which is the whole society of mankind inspired by the spirit of Christ. I consider that in the later Epistles of the New Testament the apostles distinctly set before themselves a renewed world as the object of their endeavor, — a society in which Christ shall dwell; and they begin this larger work with the family. The relative duties of the family are repeated again and again. Why? Because that circle alone was open to the Christian leaders, and that circle was the master one, the central and determining factor of the rest. They make no condition of the members of the family coming to public gatherings, but urge that all their natural life should have the spirit of Christ as its constant motive, the central principle being, "Submit yourselves one to another in the fear of God." The Christian Church has not always been faithful in carrying on this great endeavor. Even as

to the family, it has been often too much the effort of pastors and worshipers that its members should join in special acts of worship, prayer meetings, or early communions (not to speak of those who have invited them into brotherhoods and sisterhoods, or have used the confessional in such a way as to withdraw them from their natural guides, and create distrust), instead of fostering by every means the life of the family. There is nothing on earth nearer to heaven than a Christian family; and the constant effort of the pastor should be employed in urging those relative duties on which St. Paul and St. Peter dwell so earnestly. There we have our hand upon the lever which may uplift all human society, and whence the higher society above may be replenished.

But the same principle applies to other rings or circles of society. None of them should be left out of our mind. They are all capable of becoming homes of the Holy Spirit. A Christian pastor will therefore make it one of his chief endeavors that they should all be imbued with that spirit. Take, for instance, the press. None of us can dispute its great and growing power. It is, or may be, a spiritual influence, though also it may be coarse and materialistic. It is, we must all admit, a worthy effort for both pastor and congregation to win it to the right side. I think, indeed, that we should be diverting it from its proper purpose if we attempted to make all the press consist of what are called religious periodicals, unless we are able to conceive of religion as not centred in the organizations for public worship. Let the press do its own work, but in a spirit of justice, truth, and care for the public good, especially that of the poor. We may see plainly enough that if there were a suspicion of its being subjected to clerical influences, or those of some coterie of religionists, its power would be gone: but in the endeavor to be strictly true and just, and to be a real servant of mankind, the pastor and the congregation may greatly aid it. We may treat similarly systems of trade, of art, of knowledge, of amusement.

5. This leads to another, but cognate subject, the confession that all men have their ministry, and of the relation of the pastoral ministry to these other forms. We speak of "ministers" as if there were no others than the ministers who preside over congregations.

These are the ministers of the word and sacraments; and it would be well if we could so call them: for the constant appropriation of the name "ministers" to them exclusively seems to heap upon them the sole responsibility for every Christian work; and it has a still worse effect, namely, to withdraw the attribute of Christian ministry from every other calling. It is a noble expression in one of the Collects for Good Friday in the English Prayer Book, which prays that "every member of the Church, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Thee." Christians must accustom themselves to the secular ministry, the secular priesthood of all faithful men. This is acknowledged whenever we speak of our common occupations as a "calling." Calling by whom? No doubt, in its original sense, by God himself. This original sense has to be restored. We speak of the prayers and preaching in church, as a service, and the fear is that we may think of that as being the main thing which He requires of us. But the true service of God is the calling in which He has placed us, diligently, justly, lovingly fulfilled. It is a large part of the pastor's duty to encourage this view in men's minds, not to be glad merely when he sees them come to church or sacrament, but when he sees them steady and right-minded in their daily work. It is said that Christians in Uganda, when they pass men who are making a road, will say, "Thank you; you are doing a good work for us; God bless you." That should be the feeling of every Christian when he sees his fellow-men discharging aright the common duties of life. If men could feel God near them in every deed to which they set their hands, the kingdom of God would be very near us.

6. A few words may be said as to the direct visitation of parishioners in their homes. The first object, I venture to say, should be to know them: and the first pastoral visitation may well have that purpose alone. A pastor cannot expect to do much for men and women individually while he does not know them, and can only speak, as I may say, at random. There are times, no doubt, when he must hazard remarks of a general kind with imperfect knowledge, and these may lead to something more specific. It is always possible that more direct conversation on religious topics may become possible and natural: and this may lead, in an equally natural way, to

references to the Scriptures and prayer. It would be wrong to bind such intercourse by any formal rule. But as mutual knowledge and confidence increase, we may expect such opportunities to increase also, and the various agencies of a congregation bring the pastor into familiar communication with them all, till he may become like a father living among his children.

But there is one point of great difficulty in pastoral visitation as a direct spiritual agency, namely, that in the homes in which it takes place the men are almost always absent. And there are few greater dangers to us than that either our church services or other parts of our system should be matters in which only ministers and women take part. I can only suggest that a visit in the evening is often acceptable to members of the congregation, and that if it is arranged beforehand, fathers and sons will readily be present, and, if there be servants, that they may also be seen, so that family religion, as well as that of individual consecration, may be promoted. This carries into effect, though in a less formal manner, the old Presbyterian notion of the pastor's visit.

The congregation should be a body of

friends, and when this is the case they form one of the most important of the circles of which the whole social body is composed. The danger of exclusiveness or religious pride, no doubt, is a real one; but we should do wrong to refrain from friendly union with those united to us in faith and prayer because it may be abused. It is most unnatural that people should worship side by side Sunday after Sunday and know nothing of each other. And I think that this union is best effected by some common purpose. In the numerous efforts of Christian endeavor there are, ready-made, the means of coöperation. And especially when anything is done which may benefit the poorer members, the wealthier and more cultured may be asked to join and by working together to knit their bonds more strongly. The tendency to narrowness is best met by the social destination which it has been my object to vindicate for the Church. If my general theme has been true, we shall always endeavor to make our institutions not terminate in ourselves. A church brotherhood will not imply merely winning others to come to church, or confirmation, or sacrament, but, whether through these or apart from these, to the service of mankind in God's name.

We must look beyond the social circles which lie immediately at our door, and consider the effect which our church system may have upon the city and the nation, and all the rings or circles of society which they include. We have come to a stage in which successful commerce and business transactions soon place a man in a kind of dominant position; but the responsibility of such a position is rarely admitted. And even politics, which, next to religion, should be a sacred calling, are pursued without any adequate sense of their bearing on the well-being of mankind. I do not allude to the still baser degradation which both commerce and politics suffer at times from fraud or bribery. But I ask whether our church opinion is sound on these matters. Has it not been content with a few maxims which demand honesty generally while leaving the selfish motive to work itself out unrebuked? We must rise to the true view that commerce and political life are a service to God and man; a responsible ministry into which no man has a right to enter merely for the sake of gain. It is difficult, no doubt, to maintain this standard. The common feeling is that if a man has money he need not work, that if he devotes his whole life to accumulating money, he is quite in his right, and may spend it as he pleases, that he may enter into political life with a view to his own advancement. And church opinion has never steadily set itself against this selfish view of things. But if we are sincere in worshiping a God who has redeemed us through labor and suffering and death, and who tells us that if we will come after Him we must take up his cross, it is impossible to allow this selfish spirit to prevail. We must show men not merely that they are to be honest, while trying to grasp all they can for their own advantage, but that they must begin by forsaking all for Christ's sake, and that their service henceforward, whether it brings gain or loss, must be wholly a self-denying service rendered to God on man's behalf. We shall never rise to this while we insist that secular callings lie without the sphere of the Church.

We must look yet further, and think of the interests, not merely of our own country or of the Anglo-Saxon race, but of the great society of mankind which is potentially, though by no means actually, the universal Church, the home of the living God; and we must ask how our worshiping societies may and do affect it. The late Mr. Charles Pearson, in his gloomy but suggestive work on the future of national character, draws a depressing picture of the decadence of the race. He thinks that the prospect is that the yellow and dark races will increase enormously, while the highly civilized white races will both diminish and be dragged down by the sheer pressure of numbers, till all reach a uniform low level and life becomes flaccid and mean, devoid of all high interest. It is evident that in this pessimistic forecast the points of importance are, first, the comparative diminution of what are now the higher races; second, the dark and yellow men never rising to the nobler condition of Christian energy and brotherhood. On both these our Christian institutions ought to exert a counteracting influence. The plague spot of the limiting of families is known, but commonly ignored. The crime of it will never be fully recognized until we feel that we have all of us some responsibility, not for ourselves alone, but for the race. The population of France is at a standstill, if not diminishing. The birth rate in England has decreased in the last thirty years from thirtyfive per thousand to twenty-nine, and the result of this on population is not fully seen, because, through the new sanitation, the death rate has so greatly declined. In some of our towns the evil practice has become so prevalent that the schools cannot be filled. In America the vast increase of the population is due entirely to immigration; after the first generation the fell marks of voluntary sterility begin. In all the European nations the birth rate is decreasing, except in Russia, where it stands at more than forty for every thousand. Meanwhile China and India are increasing enormously. In India a single decade adds thirty millions. What is the meaning of the diminution of the white race? It is simple materialism, the preference of comfort and ease for ourselves and our children to the family joys and the expansion which God from the first ordained for the race. "Be fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth and subdue it." Let all Christian teachers and workers lay this to heart, and let all who are growing up under their influence know that to refuse or to minimize the duty of parentage is a crime against God and the race of mankind.

The direct influence which the civilized and

Christian races may exert upon the others is coming more and more to the front. We cannot escape from the "white man's burden." Commerce and locomotion, the desire to impart knowledge, the wish to save souls, all make the task before us obligatory. It is becoming the very centre of interests. That the heathen races should see only the lust and greed and covetousness and violence of the Christian nations may well bring about the disastrous condition which Mr. Pearson anticipated. It is for the Christian Church in its largest sense to prevent this. Let the gospel be carried by our worshiping bodies to the people of China and of India ; and let those who guide our commercial, diplomatic, and political forces carry with them the justice and honesty which is another and a larger gospel. By the purification of our social life from within we may yet gain the power which will make the intercourse of the white races with the dark a blessing, not a curse. When they partake of our religion and our civilization, instead of dragging us down they will add their special gifts to ours in uplifting the world to God.

But if this service of mankind is to be real and successful, it must be a united service, and with a few remarks upon Christian union as bearing upon social progress these lectures will be brought to a close. The first condition of Christianity being effective as a social power is that it should cease from presenting to mankind the spectacle of continual disputes. Those within the circle of what are called church affairs may know how to minimize a controversy, and retain some real respect for those from whom they express their differences perhaps with violence. But to those without the circle this will never appear. There is danger to the members of the societies which foster these differences; for if, while they impart to their members some measure of Christian earnestness, they at the same time instill the venom of sectarianism, they run the danger of doing that which the Pharisees did when they made proselytes. But to the ordinary citizen the effect is always repelling. He is apt to feel as Keble says one might feel if one could look into a soul torn with care and passion: "Who would not shun the dreary, uncouth place?" Public men naturally feel this, and it makes them slow to claim the sanctions of religion for their best, their social work.

In the various works of charity this disunion is a great hindrance. Even in the simple matter of the relief of the poor, the warden of Toynbee Hall, Canon Barnett, has shown how the work is constantly vitiated by the denominations not coöperating. After all inquiries have been made, and every step taken by one denomination, or even by the Charity Organization Society, so as to deal with a case judiciously, the process will be marred by the agent of another denominational society stepping in, and presenting to the poor person the temptation to concealment with a view to double relief. Men ask of every good work which is to be undertaken, "To what denomination does it belong?" and if they hear that it does not belong to their own, they are apt to look coldly on it. It may be thought that there is less of this spirit than there was. But of this I am by no means sure. I fear it is not so in England. For instance, there is a society which has done magnificent work among the fishermen of the German Ocean, — the deep sea mission. It is not attached to any denomination, and so a "Church Deep Sea Mission" is advertised. Even the time-honored Society for Preventing

Cruelty to Animals has been lately confronted with a "Church Society for Kindness to Animals." Even dumb creatures, it seems, must be affected by our religious differences. I confess that though I am a convinced churchman, yet when I hear the word "Church" attached to any scheme of benevolence, I feel that its good is marred; for it means, not that religious influences and pastoral care are to be applied, — that may easily be secured; — but this, that clerical power will be supreme, and that no dissenters need apply.

In missions to the heathen the case is still more serious; for when the natives of India (I am quoting the words of a highly honored British statesman) see in a single street in Calcutta six establishments, each claiming to represent the Christian religion, but each separated from the rest because it believes itself to do this better than the others, they naturally turn away from them all. The head of the Indian Brahmo Somaj told me a short time ago that Max Müller had recommended them to become Christians. But he said, as I have heard his predecessor, Keshub Chunder Sen, say, "Into which of your religions am I to be baptized? I cannot become a Christian simply."

It may be asked, perhaps, whether the larger, social conception of the Church, if accepted, would tend to destroy the distinctive forms in which men have come to unite in worship. It may be that it would tend to make the differences less rigorous. But the various worshiping bodies have been so compactly organized, with their buildings, their colleges, their history, that any diminution of them or any amalgamation, is not very likely to take place. More constant and friendly intercourse we may expect — we see it in many quarters. But what should be desired is that each sect should cease to call itself the Church; and that no combination of sects should be supposed to represent the Church as a whole; that we should look upon the whole Christian society to which we belong as Christ's Church, and should think of the worshiping bodies as subordinate societies voluntarily uniting for prayer and Christian instruction. However many there may be of such bodies, and however they may vindicate their right of independent management, they will no longer incur the reproach of dividing the Church, when they confess that the Church is the great social organism, to which in their varying degrees they minister.

I am aware that we must not look for immediate results by great schemes of reunion. But neither must we sit still amidst the evils of disunion. We must take every means for drawing together, especially by mutual conference, so as to know and understand each other. But by far the most hopeful means of coöperation lies in that social progress which we have been considering. If we are convinced that the kingdom of God means not primarily ordinances and secondarily righteousness, but primarily Christian righteousness, which is the same as social progress, and then, as a secondary thing, religious ordinances directed towards this end, a great deal will have been done to remove this great hindrance of sectarianism. We shall then be able to feel that we belong to the great and true Church, the Church of God and of humanity, which is working out the Christian evolution of society by all the means, public and private, which the constitution of society presents; and we shall be able to say with a good conscience to all mankind: Join us in the great object of the Church; worship where you think best, or where this great object is best pursued. But in whatever form, let us work together towards the building up of human relations in the spirit of Christ; for that is the object for which God made men to live together in society.

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